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CHARLES WATERS

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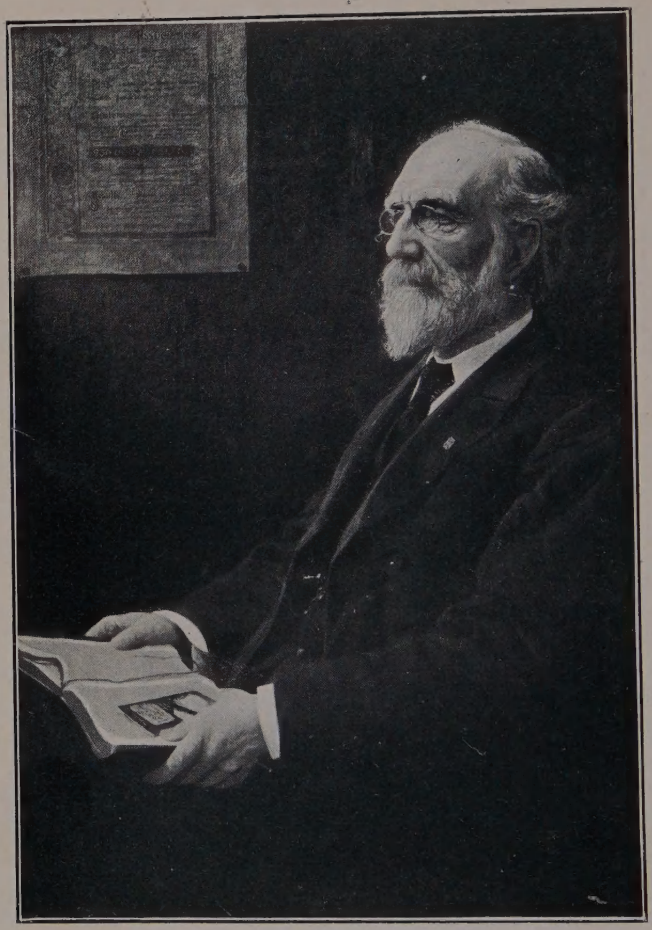

MR. CHARLES WATERS.

(From the Presentation Portrait painted in oils by G. Hillyard Swinstead.) [FRONTISPIECE.

CHARLES WATERS

The Founder of the International Bible Reading Association

BY

ROBERT SLOAN LATIMER

AUTHOR OF
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"UNDER THREE TSARS" ETC. ETC.

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PREFACE

By Sir F. F. BELSEY, J.P.,
CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION.

IN commending the following pages to every Christian worker who seeks an example of fidelity and devotion in the service of Christ and his fellow-men, and who will, I am sure, gather from this excellently written little volume fresh inspiration and a deeper spirit of self-sacrifice, I venture, on behalf of the former colleagues of Mr. Charles Waters on The Sunday School Union Council, to express our sense of the immense, and I think I may say, the unprecedented service he rendered to our great work.

When we remember that our Continental Mission, our International Bible Reading Association, our Indian Sunday School Union, and the Christian Endeavour Societies of our country were developed mainly by his unremitting toil and statesmanlike supervision, we feel we must indeed thank God for giving us such a colleague and for so richly blessing his labours.

From the different standpoints of a customer of the Bank branch he managed and the Chairmanship of the Council regularly receiving the reports of the several Committees of which Mr. Waters was the life and soul, I was enabled to form some due estimate of the rare fidelity and quiet earnestness that marked all his actions, religious or secular.

We of The Sunday School Union have sustained, as this little volume will show, no ordinary loss in the death of Mr. Waters. Our prayer is that the record of his life and labours here presented to the reader may move other hearts in a similar spirit to devote themselves to the joyous service of Christ and the Children.

56 Old Bailey,
31*st March* 1910.

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Charles Waters

CHAPTER I.

A PERSONAL SKETCH.

GOD gave to Charles Waters exactly those qualities that adapted him for his remarkable life-work. He is a striking instance of what God can accomplish with a man of common mould, fully surrendered to His service, and content to go quietly along homely paths of duty.

In the wisdom of God he was not conspicuous for those brilliant popular gifts which men covet. Otherwise this record could never have been written. He had neither eloquence, nor commanding position, nor lavish wealth, nor literary genius, nor a magnetic personality, nor a compelling name and reputation. He was originally just an ordinary delegate, sent by a local Sunday School Auxiliary to the Central Council of the

Union. But those modest gifts that God had bestowed upon him he used with such consecrated zeal that he stands now among the first-grade servants, those who are able to say, "Lord, Thy pound hath gained ten pounds!"

It is not the servant with one talent to-day who hides his Lord's money; it is he who has ten—or who thinks he has ten, or even more. He is too proud to stoop to such lowly feet-washing service as the Divine Master has ever required of His faithful ones. One has too exceptional a voice to be found in an ordinary choir; another is altogether too cultured to teach in the Sunday school; a third occupies too respectable a position in the neighbourhood to go out into the highways and hedges to compel them to come in; a fourth wears too fashionable attire and too many gold ornaments to visit the needy and distressed; a fifth has too large a business to conduct, to spare an hour for the prayer-meeting; a sixth has no "small change" for the collection plate. So the ten talents are folded away in a napkin, the owner carefully re-counting them under the impression that there were eleven, and so God is robbed of His own.

Not so Charles Waters. From his conversion in early youth he laid his time, his abilities, his strength, his hopes, his little purse on the altar; and not at all with any display of "See how good I am," but artlessly, naturally, quietly, in the love of God.

He was patient, painstaking, doggedly resolute, unwearyingly constant "lo, these many years"; and before all else he was taught, guided, and inspired of the Divine Teacher, the Holy Spirit. Mr. Waters was a burning rather than a shining light. The secret zeal of God glowed within his soul steadily, intensely, with rarely a glimmer betraying to those standing nearest the vehement fire of purpose in his strong spirit. He planned his great campaigns for Christ like a field marshal, taciturn, reflective, answering only in abrupt monosyllables, his mind occupied with deep and far-reaching thoughts; his brain so busily occupied that his tongue took ready holiday. Indeed, he was more like the head of the commissariat department of a serious campaign than like the field marshal; for the latter stands in prominent places and wears his glowing honours before all eyes, while the former bears enormous responsibilities and passes unknown.

On one of his voyages across the Atlantic he thus speaks of his explorations below the decks: "Some of us made a descent into the depths of the engine-room and the furnaces. It was very uncanny. The darkness was lit up with a few electric and oil lamps, while grimy men, scantily clad, were toiling among the twelve boilers and the thirty-six furnaces."

The workers upon the gospel ship are not all upon the bridge, in resplendent uniforms. Charles Waters was an engineer aboard. He was hidden

out of sight all his life; but who shall say how greatly the throb of progress of the Church of God in this generation has been helped by his activities? Almost the last Annual Report of the "I.B.R.A." from his pen contained the following sentence:—

"The work called not for heroic deeds with which the world might ring, or which might provide a sensational headline for an evening paper. Neither in its early days did it receive much encouragement from those in authority in religious matters."

It has been alleged that his life ran in a narrow channel. Some have complained that his religious views were narrow. At all events, they were very definite; and they were of such a character as to give purpose and intensity to his life. It is not the broad stream that turns the mill. You can leap across the Yorkshire river Wharfe at the Strid. It is but a yard or two from one rock to that opposite. But with what lightning swiftness do the waters pass you! The people thereabouts hint fearsomely, too, of enormous caverns carved out of the rocks just beneath your feet, where the waters swirl and boil in never-ceasing fury. So this man's deep, silent energies raced forward with tremendous force year after year to the accomplishment of the great purpose that God had set before him.

A man of fine presence, rather above medium height, venerable in appearance of late, he moved

with a peculiarly light, springy step and manner, suggestive of a heart at peace, and a decision clear and calm, and reserves of strength that belied his seventy years. With no inclination either to gaiety or to garrulity, he was withal invariably courteous and considerate, grave and dignified, a happy example of the Christian gentleman.

Mr. Waters never regarded himself as other than one of the lowly ones among the servants of the Great King. He was unassuming and unobtrusive. He was rarely seen on the platform apart from his own work, and seldom as a preacher in the pulpit; although in his early manhood he hoped that the Master might permit him that privilege. Under date January 1, 1862, in his diary there is this entry:—

"Let me live to Thee, O Lord; and oh, if it be Thy will, let me be a shepherd of Thy sheep, and a means of saving many souls!"

Has not that prayer been answered?

Mr. Waters occupied the responsible position of manager of the King's Cross (London) branch of the London and County Bank for twenty-five years. His business career gave him a peculiar fitness for his Christian work. His methodical habits, his practical grasp of detail, his clear judgment, his accuracy of insight into the heart of facts, his shrewdness in estimating character and probabilities, his reticence and dignity of bearing, were all invaluable aids to his management of those affairs of the Union that came under his control.

It was as a "secretary" that he served the Church of God from his youth up. He was apparently an ideal secretary from the beginning; and the long and varied experience of the passing years matured and made more expert his abilities. The great number of volumes recording the minutes of the committees of the Union upon which he served, and the letter-books containing copies of Sunday School Union correspondence in his characteristically clear handwriting, concise, explicit, and business-like, are in their own way witness to the humble and faithful labours he performed for so many years.

"Cold Waters" was the sobriquet banteringly bestowed upon him by his pastor and friend, C. H. Spurgeon, who greatly loved a jest. In the light of Prov. xxv. 25, the term was not inappropriate, for his life and service were indeed a fountain of blessing to vast multitudes; a part of the "pure river" that flows unceasingly from the Throne.

CHAPTER II.

HIS EARLY YEARS AND BUSINESS CAREER.

HEN that mighty man of God, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, was in his youth attracting enormous crowds to his ministry, Charles Waters arrived in London from Maidstone to take a position in the London and County Banking Company. He was then just twenty years of age, having been born at Loose, near Maidstone, on the 22nd September 1839.

As a youth he attended the ministry of Rev. David Cranbrook, in Maidstone. Like many another, the Lord opened his heart very early and very gently to the Divine Light and Life. There was no memory of a definite date or of striking circumstances of conversion. There was no troubled watching for the breaking of the spiritual morning. He awoke and it was broad daylight; and he forgot that he had ever slept! He was baptized by Mr. Cranbrook, and received by him into the fellowship of the Church of God.

In the Sunday school connected with the Maidstone chapel he found his first sphere of service for his Lord. He was one of four to whom were given the charge of a class of little ones. His turn to teach came only once in four weeks, but thus early the fire of Sunday-school ardour burned within him, and every Sunday he was in the class. A year or two later, he ventured into the pulpit occasionally in the villages around Maidstone, and even in Maidstone itself, among his neighbours and the friends of his youth. One of these youthful sermons, delivered when he was eighteen years of age in the Bethel Chapel, Maidstone, is preserved to us. From the text, "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree" (Ps. xcii. 12), he spoke upon the *situation*, *vitality*, *uprightness*, *utility*, and *stability* of the tree, and deduced excellent practical lessons. His shrewd remarks under the heading *utility* were happily exemplified in his own future life:—

"The true Christian must not be so extremely spiritual as to forget that he is yet on earth and that around him are thousands who are perishing both in body and soul. . . . To live and labour for Christ should be the object of our highest ambition. . . . Alas! how far short of our duty have we fallen, and of our ability also! . . . Young Christians, let us in the strength of youth and with fervent zeal go forth to do and dare for our Master.

'He liveth long who liveth well;
All other life is short and vain:

MR. CHARLES WATERS.

(*From a Photograph taken in 1871.*)

He liveth longest who can tell
Of living most for heavenly gain.

Be what thou seemest, live thy creed;
Hold up to earth the light divine:
Be what thou prayest to be made;
Let the great Master's steps be thine.'"

In London, Charles Waters was attracted, like thousands of other young fellows, to the brilliant and spiritual ministry of C. H. Spurgeon, who had himself only reached his majority. His membership was transferred from Maidstone to Mr. Spurgeon's church in New Park Street, Southwark; and here he was happily united in marriage to Miss Goodwin, the lady who has survived to mourn his decease. Mr. Spurgeon's note of congratulation to the young couple, dated November 1863, is characteristic of its vivacious author:—

"I hope you will have every blessing in your wedded life. I hope your honeymoon will never be over; not, at least, the honey; the moon can be dispensed with."

At the Surrey Gardens Music Hall services, and later when the Metropolitan Tabernacle was built at Newington Butts, Charles Waters threw himself heart and soul into that evangelistic campaign of Mr. Spurgeon which under God was so fruitful of results to South London. When the New Park Street scholars removed into the new and commodious quarters at the Tabernacle, Mr. Waters became a teacher, and witnessed the huge halls fill up on Sunday afternoons, as children from near and

far flocked to that great hive of Christian effort. In his cash diary there is at this date the following significant entry. Young men, note it well!

"Thank-offering for increase of salary."

At this point it may be well to outline his business career. After rendering assistance as a junior clerk in several other branch establishments belonging to the London and County Banking Company, Mr. Waters was located at the Newington Butts branch, close to the Tabernacle, as cashier. A serious physical infirmity known as "Scrivener's palsy" in the thumb of his right hand developing, threatened to destroy his prospects. His medical adviser suggested a long rest and a sea-voyage; and he took passage for Spain and North Africa. His visit to Morocco was always a pleasant memory of his early life. The officers and crew called him "the ship's doctor," because they found him able to advise them in their ailments. While on board he established a "practice" more extensive than lucrative, and gained a considerable medical reputation. Like his Master, "he went about doing good." To his joy, the cessation from writing for these weeks upon the high seas had the desired effect, and his hand was graciously healed by the Great Physician, and he was able to resume his duties at the Bank.

In 1879, Mr. Waters was appointed by the Directors to be the manager of their establishment at King's Cross, North London. The goodwill of

his colleagues at Newington was shown on the occasion by their presentation to him of a silver cake-basket on which is the inscription: "Presented to Charles Waters, Esq. (on his promotion), by his colleagues at the London and County Bank, Newington, as a token of their esteem. Dec. 31, 1878."

For twenty-five years Mr. Waters faithfully served the Banking Company at King's Cross. In his business he showed the same conscientiousness in the discharge of his duties, the same painstaking attention to detail, the same punctuality and scrupulous integrity and honour, the same quiet courtesy, that always characterised his work for the Divine Master.

The public opinion of him as a business man, in a most responsible position in the great commercial metropolis of the world, was expressed when, at the end of 1904, after his long period of service at King's Cross, he retired into private life.

The customers of the Bank invited him to attend a complimentary dinner at the Holborn Restaurant as their guest. The public press gave a full report of the proceedings. The Chairman (A. G. Wylie, Esq.) said—

"Mr. Waters is a gentleman who has done his duty faithfully and well for twenty-five years. . . . We are only too pleased to come here and honour him to-night. . . . Many letters have been received from customers showing the good opinion in which he is held. . . . I have known him ever since he came

first to this district, and have found him the most fair-dealing and kindly gentleman I have ever come in contact with. In asking Mr. Waters' acceptance of a gold watch, we all trust he may have long life and good health. We also wish to show our appreciation of the way in which Mrs. Waters has looked after her husband. We know she must be a kind and devoted wife, for Mr. Waters' appearance testifies to that. We wish her to accept this diamond ring and this silver teapot, and hope she may be long spared to share the happy companionship of her husband in the quieter and more restful days of his life."

Thus side by side with Mr. Waters' splendid record in spiritual service ran his upright and faithful business career, in which he exemplified the apostolic precept, "Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."

CHAPTER III.

THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE AND THE SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION.

ETWEEN Ludgate on the south and Newgate on the north, with the far-famed book-publishing world of Paternoster Row on the east and the wide-embracing newspaper-publishing world of Fleet Street on the west, under the shadow of the great Cathedral of St. Paul, in a cramped thoroughfare called "Old Bailey," in which to-day there is no *ballium* or open space, are situated the premises of The Sunday School Union. Here also, crowned by a lofty figure of Justice with her sword and scales, rises the newly rebuilt court of Newgate—the grim prison was recently pulled down. There stand the two buildings on opposite sides of the way: the one suggestive of hope, the other of despair; the one appealing to childhood and youth and bright innocence and all that is good and beautiful in the golden promise of life's sweet early days, the other uttering the

harsh note of reproach and denunciation over the withered prospects and blasted character and bitter memories of life's disillusioned days. Could there be a greater contrast than that which you may see any day in the juxtaposition of these two significant buildings in this cramped street?

In the year 1865, Mr. Waters was appointed by the Tabernacle teachers to represent them in the Lambeth Auxiliary Sunday School Union. Mr. H. Hawkes, his lifelong friend and colleague in Christian service, says: "His old acquaintances remember how they were impressed with the thoroughness with which, even in those early days, he performed every duty that fell to him. He gauged the extent of the Auxiliary by walking all round the boundary, and before very long he knew not only the position of every school, but the character of almost every teacher, for he made a point of meeting them all."

The Lambeth Auxiliary appears to have elected him almost at once as Minute Secretary. Mr. Waters, in accepting the office, promised "to give his best energies to the work"; a promise which evidently he faithfully fulfilled, for when he retired from the position after thirteen years' occupancy of it, his colleagues showered gifts upon him in token of their appreciation. These included a marble timepiece, a handsome davenport, and a framed illuminated Address, signed by the President, James Stiff—a name still fragrant of beneficence in South London—and the rest of the Committee.

While Secretary to the Lambeth Auxiliary, Mr. Waters shared in some notable events in the local history. The Jubilee of the Auxiliary was celebrated in March 1868. In 1872 the Scholars' Scripture Examinations were instituted by the Sunday School Union. These were then much more troublesome matters for the secretaries than they are to-day, as Mr. Hawkes can testify. The success of the venture, however, was ample repayment. At the first Prize Presentation, which was held in the Tabernacle Lecture Hall, there was an overflowing attendance and great enthusiasm.

In November 1874 a new departure was projected in the form of an Industrial Exhibition, which was also held at the Tabernacle. The Exhibition was doubtless of considerable educational value. There were pictures, lifeboat models, curiosities and photographs from Palestine, missionary relics, Bibles, antiquities, objects of interest from many lands, models, etc. etc.

A united Sunday School Choir was gathered together from the schools in the Auxiliary which rendered several services of song in the Tabernacle and elsewhere. Canon Fleming, then incumbent of Camden Chapel, Peckham, was the reader at the first of these musical services, and without bill or other printed advertisement the Tabernacle was crowded to the doors with ticket-holders, and £100 was raised for the funds of the Auxiliary. Clearly the Secretary was a young man full of energy and "go."

Mr. Waters' Temperance work at this period must be alluded to. His faded Temperance pledge card exists with the heading "Maidstone Temperance Society, May 24, 1859." In wisdom, before leaving his quiet country home, he doubly fortified himself against the destroyer of youth in our great cities, by yielding his heart and his life to God, and by becoming a total abstainer. If not the originator, he was certainly the first Secretary of the Band of Hope at the Tabernacle. The meetings were held in the Lecture Hall, and they were very popular indeed. Well-known men were invited, who attracted great audiences. Judge Payne was a prime favourite. He was a speaker of overflowing wit and abundant rhymes. Professor W. R. Selway, Revs. J. M. Murphy, Jabez Burns, George Wilson M'Cree, and other celebrities will be remembered as contributing to the success of the gatherings.

When in the later sixties the Stockwell Orphanage was built in the Clapham Road, that great memorial to the philanthropy of C. H. Spurgeon and the Tabernacle Church, Mr. Waters felt impelled to introduce the Band of Hope among the boys in the institution. To the great delight of the lads, he arranged with Mr. Spurgeon and Mr. Charlesworth, the headmaster, to conduct monthly meetings in the dining-hall. Many of the boys signed the pledge—with, of course, the permission of their relatives.

Young life clearly held a fascination for him.

He took his boy-friends to his heart—and to his hearth also. The writer has a most agreeable memory of a sunshiny afternoon spent at his house near Kennington Park in the year 1870, when as a lad he was rehearsing a recitation for a special Temperance celebration at the Tabernacle. From that day at least one person loved Charles Waters.

When Mr. Waters went to the Council of The Sunday School Union, he felt compelled by the pressure of his new duties to relinquish the management of the Temperance work at the Tabernacle. The Band of Hope parted from him with many regrets, and presented him with a beautifully bound Family Bible, containing an illuminated inscription.

The Tabernacle Colportage Association, a practical organisation that for nearly fifty years has scattered good literature throughout rural England, owed much in its early days to Mr. Waters. On the eve of one of his Continental journeys Mr. Spurgeon called a few friends together, Mr. Waters among the number, to suggest the launching of this enterprise. At that meeting the Association was formed. Some years afterwards, knowing Mr. Waters' reputation as a first-class business man, Mr. Spurgeon requested him to supervise the financial arrangements of the Association as Honorary Trade Manager. Mr. Spurgeon greatly appreciated his services, as will be seen from the following letter written on his retirement several years afterwards :—

"DEAR MR. WATERS,—I cannot permit you to leave the Colportage without a very fervent word of gratitude from myself.

"I do not wonder that you have to give it up; for knowing how you are occupied, I wonder far more that you have persevered so long.

"This good work owes much to your industrious care. You have carried out all that you undertook. You are a brother on whom we can rely. The instability of water is very far removed from 'Waters.' It gives me joy to have in membership with us a man of such solid worth.

"From my heart I thank you for bearing so much of the burden in reference to Colportage. All the brethren will miss you, and I can only beg you to pray that some one may be raised up worthily to fill your place.

"May the blessing of our Lord always rest upon you in your other works of faith!—Yours very heartily, C. H. SPURGEON."

In the year 1872, Mr. Waters was sent to the Central Council of the Sunday School Union, as the elected member for the Lambeth Auxiliary. His old friends in Lambeth presented him with a testimonial on the occasion, and as a further mark of appreciation made him one of their Vice-Presidents.

The new member carried into the Council an enthusiastic heart and a fertile brain. One of his first suggestions to his colleagues was the

appointment of a Committee to promote the formation of Christian Bands in connection with the affiliated Sunday schools throughout the country, in order to aid and nurture the spiritual life of the young. His suggestion was adopted. He was appointed Secretary of the Committee; and when afterwards the Christian Endeavour scheme was introduced into this country, these Christian Bands became in many cases the nucleus of the new societies.

It will be seen that the Metropolitan Tabernacle was the training-school for Mr. Waters' future life-work. What a training-school it was! Is it to be wondered at that he loved and revered the Word of the living God, and that he devoted himself with such consuming fervour to the work of winning others to love it too? As he sat in the great gallery listening Sunday after Sunday to that marvellous evangelist and teacher, he learned to know the Bible, not in the letter only but in its spirit and power.

As he moved about among the young people in the school, he became expert in handling young life sympathetically; he learned what possibilities lie in early youth when under the influence of tactful and consecrated Christian workers.

Mr. Waters remained in membership with the Tabernacle Church to the end of his life. From Kennington Park he removed to Overton Road, Brixton; and his conscientious objection to the use of public conveyances on the Lord's Day prevented

his attendance of late years at the Sunday services. He lived for many years in Brixton, his family attending Wynne Road Church. After his retirement from business, which took place in 1904, he removed finally to Streatham Hill.

The ordinance of the Lord's Supper Mr. Waters greatly valued; but as he would not ride to the Tabernacle on the Sunday he usually attended the Thursday evening Communion service.

When Pastor Thomas Spurgeon succeeded his father, Mr. Waters showed the same loyal affection to the son that he had for so many years shown to C. H. Spurgeon; and when, after fourteen years of most devoted service, Pastor Thomas Spurgeon owing to ill-health laid down the cares of office, Mr. Waters was asked by the Church to move an affectionate request that the retiring minister should reconsider the matter and remain as pastor, taking such duty as his strength permitted.

It was appropriate that the more recent of the Annual Meetings of the International Bible Reading Association should have been held in the Tabernacle, because of the lifelong associations of Mr. Waters with the spot. It is interesting also to learn that the branch reporting the highest membership in the kingdom at the last Annual Meeting was the branch connected with that historic and famous church.

CHAPTER IV.

HIS HOME.

NCHORED like a lightship to one spot for practically the entire period of his long and diligent life, Mr. Waters like a lightship cast the bright beams of his service far across the world's wide oceans. Most people in the course of a lifetime change the locality of their abode and the scenes of their activity many times. From the day of his arrival in London in his youth, Mr. Waters' entire life, domestic, religious, and commercial, was spent within three or four miles of the heart of London City. Each morning due north, in a direct line over the brown flood of the Thames, from Brixton to King's Cross; each afternoon due south, from King's Cross to Brixton, like a sentry striding his small beat, or a pendulum swinging to and fro, for twenty-five years with unvarying regularity he journeyed within the little limits of his circumscribed life.

But not circumscribed were his sympathies, or his

Christian enterprises, or his ambitions for his Lord and for the Kingdom. These, like the Redeemer's purposes of love, ran forth with shining feet over the whole world. He was one of those men of great soul who treasure up like precious gold dust opportunities of service for the Master, such as writing a letter brimful of sympathy to a casual sick correspondent, and at the same time "think in continents" and dream of world-conquests.

His home was in South London, at Brixton. The neighbourhood has many historical associations. Sir Walter Raleigh has left his name behind in the district, and so has a certain Mr. Angell. In Angell Town, Mr. Waters dwelt for many happy years. There is a group-photograph extant showing an assembly of about forty friends interested in Christian Endeavour at a garden-party. In the centre of the group sits the Rev. F. B. Meyer, who was for that year President of the London C.E. Union. Mr. and Mrs. Waters were host and hostess to many such pleasant reunions.

God gave them the priceless gift of children, two girls and three boys, all of whom survive their father.

We may not draw aside too roughly the veil that hides this shrine of domestic love from the public gaze. One brief extract from Mr. Waters' diary will at a single glance illuminate for us his home and his heart:—

"The year has closed in prayer, uniting gratitude

for the past with supplication for the future. How many mercies have crowned the year! For all Thy favours, Lord, I praise and bless Thy name, but chiefly for the blessings of a happy home and a loving wife—mercies of no small value and which I do not lightly esteem. . . . Praised be Thy holy name, O God of mercies! May my heart ever praise Thee, and my tongue ever speak of Thy goodness. Bless the Lord, O my soul!"

It is not surprising to learn that he who led so many thousands in the study of the Word of God himself took great delight in its pages. He could well use the words of the Psalmist: "Oh, how I love Thy law! it is my meditation all the day."

If books are houses wherein our minds receive hospitable entertainment, and authors are hosts, then surely the Bible is the King's royal palace in the midst of the vast city of literature. Mr. Waters was greatly at home in this royal palace. Right early in their childhood and full often he wandered through its galleries and apartments hand in hand with his three sons and his two daughters.

His sons cherish bright memories of Sunday evening walks from the Tabernacle at the close of the service on starry winter evenings. Facing them and arching overhead was the glorious southern sky, exhibiting the great constellations that give such magnificent beauty to our moonless winter nights; Orion with belt and sword, and of course that mysterious and fascinating cluster, the

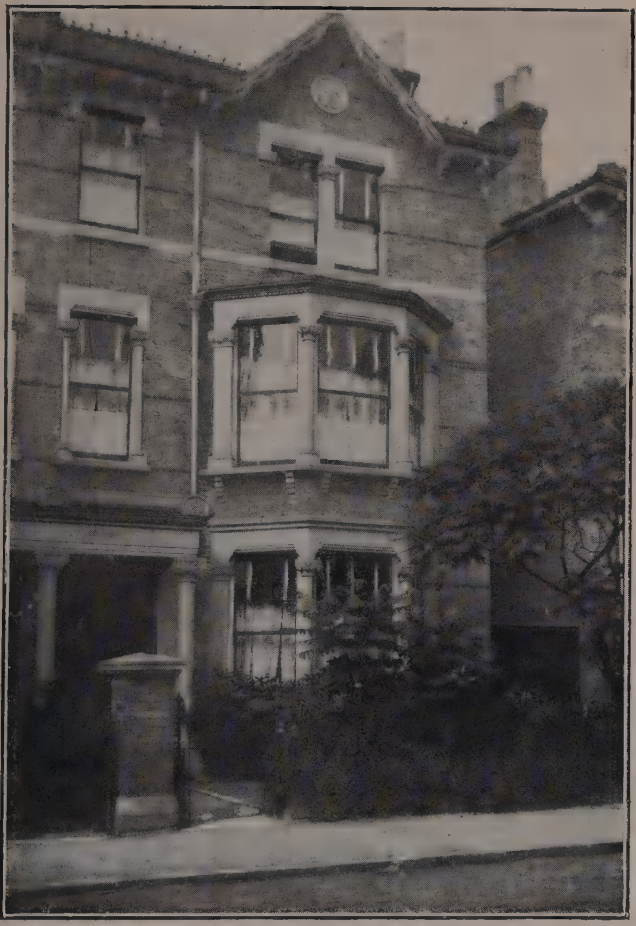
Pleiades; Perseus and Andromeda, the Twins, and the rest. Mr. Waters in his early life loved the study of astronomy as a relaxation, and the children were keen listeners and searchers as their father pointed out the location of the different stars, the great glittering Sirius, and Aldebaran, and Capella high overhead, and away in the north, the Pole star, with the Guards, and the Plough, and Cassiopeia, and now and again one or two of the planets shining steadily in the midst of their twinkling neighbours, so near together apparently, and yet separated by spaces inconceivable.

It was a natural and inspiring transition from the Word of God expounded so earnestly and faithfully by Mr. Spurgeon in the house of God, to the works of God so sublime and awe-inspiring in the greater house of God—the deep blue heavens above them and around them.

If Mr. Waters had any hobbies—and he insisted in his later years that the I.B.R.A. was his one and only hobby and relaxation—they were the mild pleasures of philately and amateur photography; but he was in no degree the victim of either of them. They were never a craze with him.

"You must receive great numbers of foreign postage stamps in the course of your correspondence," said a friend to him during a railway journey, in which he had produced most interesting letters respecting the work of God in foreign lands.

"Yes, I get a few, certainly," he replied quietly.



RESIDENCE OF MR. CHARLES WATERS,
26 Montrell Road, Streatham Hill
(From a Photograph taken by himself.)

"Do you collect? I should, if I were in your place."

"Yes, I have collected for many years. Indeed, my collection was begun long before philately became a popular hobby." So saying, he brought out from his waistcoat pocket a small box containing about twenty stamps.

"These are my recent acquisitions. But it is very difficult nowadays to secure fresh specimens. Ordinary foreign correspondence does not help you."

"How many varieties have you?"

"Upwards of four thousand, and some of them very rare. But I do not pay much attention to the matter. I rarely buy, and still more rarely sell. My collection has of late years had very few additions."

The snapshots were always much more in evidence than the stamps.

"Stand over there, while I snap you," is an expression that most of his friends have heard him use. His camera was the amiable companion of his holidays. He had printed for circulation among his friends a rather tastefully got up *Souvenir* of his visit to Switzerland in 1909, in which appeared several reproductions of excellent photographs of Swiss scenes, the Seeburg châlets (which he and his I.B.R.A. holiday companions made their headquarters), a street in Andermatt, Tell's Monument, Altdorf, and a very fine view from the summit of Pilatus of cloud-wreathed and snow-covered mountain summits.

"It was a grand sight which met our eyes in the long snowclad line of Alpine giants in their silent majesty piercing the great sea of cloud which rolled beneath us, with here and there a lower peak rising through."

The home of Mr. and Mrs. Waters in Overton Road, and afterwards in Montrell Road, had an "ever open door" to servants of the Lord from foreign lands. No guest could have enjoyed the hospitality of more genial and considerate host and hostess than these beloved fellow-Christians found in Charles Waters and his like-minded wife. The little grandchildren were always encouraged to speak and think of these guests as "uncle" or "auntie." The little ones thus discovered that they had great numbers of "uncles" and "aunties" with very unfamiliar names, but with kind faces and gentle hands and loving hearts—in these respects fully equal to the uncles and aunties with whom they were more familiar.

"Uncle" Podin, from the province of Esthonia in Russia, writing of one of his visits in which he enjoyed "the happy family evening," says—

"My two boys soon learned the piece, 'Remember, remember the fifth of November.' Surely your dear nice grandchildren will remember the Russian gentleman who learned so slowly 'Remember, remember the fifth of November.'"

"Uncle" Wessling, from Stockholm, says, in a letter to Mrs. Waters—

"I wish to tell you how my touch with Mr.

Waters through his loveful correspondence and through the unforgotten dear days in your home, and in the near presence of Mr. Waters and his family, has been a great blessing to me, a point of light for my whole life. . . . I will never forget my experiences, how you, dear Mrs. Waters, have been standing as a warm, interested, and encouraging comrade in your husband's great work. You are our true I.B.R.A. mother, . . . the wife of their hero!"

"Auntie" Italia Garibaldi lives in Rome; "Uncle" Engberg lives in Bridgeport, Connecticut, United States; "Uncle" Palm lives in Sweden; "Uncle" Hoijer also lives somewhere in Sweden when he is at home, but he is usually preaching away in South Russia; "Uncle" Ernesto Filippini lives also in Rome—that is when he is not in other places in Italy looking after the Sunday schools. There were a great number of these amiable "uncles" and "aunties" from strange and far-away Somewheres, to which you could not get by the penny electric cars because they were so far away. Doubtless the grandchildren's little heads were filled with wonderment when they went to their cosy beds after an evening's romp and talk with their grandpa's visitors, as to the lands and the peoples of which they had heard their new relations speak.

At any rate, whatever the children thought about *them*, the visitors had only one opinion about *him*. This opinion has been well and concisely

expressed by "Uncle" Arthur B. Field, of Caulfield, near Melbourne, Australia:

"A more loving and a kinder man I do not think I ever met, or one in whom could be more quickly recognised the Christian gentleman."

There is quite an interesting variety of tokens of the affectionate appreciation by the world of Christian men and women outside of the head of the household, in Mr. Waters' home. The presentation oil painting by Mr. Hillyard Swinstead hangs in the dining-room. Beneath it is the inscription: "Charles Waters, Founder and Honorary Secretary of the International Bible Reading Association. Presented to him by the members of the Association, and the Council of the Sunday School Union, on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee, April, 1907."

This portrait, together with a replica of it which remains the property of the Union, an illuminated Address, and an Album containing messages of appreciation from all parts of the world, were paid for out of a fund raised among the members of the I.B.R.A. in subscriptions ranging from a halfpenny to a shilling per member. There was a surplus of £300, which was also handed to Mr. Waters.

The circular letter issued by the Union inviting these innumerable but small contributions (for the sum per individual was not to exceed one shilling) contained the following sentence:

"Without any consideration for himself, Mr. Waters has cheerfully devoted his leisure time to this work, and, since his recent retirement from professional

life, has placed the whole of his time at the disposal of the I.B.R.A."

On the mantelpiece, under the portrait is the marble timepiece with an inscription upon a plate setting forth the goodwill of the Lambeth Auxiliary Sunday School Union. In the drawing-room is an Address, in a handsome frame, which was presented to him by the London C.E. Council on 28th March 1902: "The regularity and faithfulness with which you have discharged every duty have been a blessing and a stimulus to us all, and have exerted an influence upon the progress of C.E. throughout London." On a table near is the presentation Family Bible from the Tabernacle Band of Hope. And in close proximity are album Addresses illuminated most artistically, and articles of furniture, or silver ware engraved with inscriptions, which were presented to him on various occasions, as acknowledgments of voluntary services whole-heartedly rendered by the recipient.

Not the least prized of these mementos was a set of seven volumes of the *Treasury of David* by C. H. Spurgeon, in which was written in the author's neat hand the following:—

"To Charles Waters,
from
C. H. Spurgeon,
a token of profound esteem and Christian love,
Sept. 1878."

CHAPTER V.

ON THE CONTINENTAL COMMITTEE.

NE of the most important branches of the work of the Sunday School Union is the Continental Mission, of the Committee of which Mr. Waters became a member in the year 1882.

The Continental Mission was established in consequence of urgent representations to the Union of the spiritual destitution of the millions of children in European lands. The effort to evangelise among these children was begun in 1864, and has enlarged its scope practically every year since that date, until to-day upwards of two million boys and girls are under the influence of a hundred thousand teachers in twenty-eight thousand Sunday schools on the continent of Europe. What the harvest will be of this wide-spread seed-sowing, eternity will reveal. One result is tangible and visible enough. The best workers to-day in the Evangelical Churches in

these countries were themselves the Sunday scholars of a few years ago.

The Mission is financially dependent upon the contributions sent in by British Sunday schools for its beneficent operations. As there are no large subscriptions, but only the pence of the children, the income has never been worthy of the magnificent object the Society has in view; and it is astonishing that such widespread and fruitful propaganda have been efficiently maintained for so many years upon such slender resources. This fact when properly appreciated is perhaps the highest tribute that could be paid to the business capacity and financial skill of the Committee, and especially of Mr. Waters, who was a member of the Committee for twenty-eight years, and was Chairman from June 1895 until his decease.

The method of the Mission in beginning its work in a new country has usually been to seek out a few representative Evangelical friends and persuade them to unite together in a working Committee. To these would be sent a Sunday-school missionary, who would travel hither and thither creating and fostering an interest in Sunday-school work, and organising schools as openings presented themselves.

The first field was Germany; and France, Switzerland, Holland, Denmark, Italy, Sweden, and Norway followed, as means and suitable men were forthcoming. Operations in Protestant lands have been comparatively easy; but there has been

much difficulty, owing to the hostility of the Roman Catholic and the Greek Orthodox Churches respectively, in Romanist countries and in Russia.

Even in certain parts of Protestant Germany, however, Christian workers have had some bitter experiences, owing to the intolerance of the authorities. A little Sunday school in Planitz, Saxony, was in 1884 closed by the police, and the children were forbidden to attend any kind of service. Even a baby in the arms of its mother must not be present at a religious meeting; one woman being ordered out of a Baptist service because she had her infant with her. Teachers and parents of the children were threatened with punishments of fine and imprisonment. Nor did the enemies of light and truth stop at threats. The teachers of the school at Chemnitz were fined one hundred marks as recently as the year 1899 for reopening a school that the authorities had ordered to be disbanded. The removal of a hostile official was usually the signal to these brave pioneers for the resumption of operations. Is it any wonder that, coming into direct touch with these heroic souls, Mr. Waters' heart was on fire with a passionate desire to aid them to the very uttermost?

Notwithstanding many efforts, the attempt has not hitherto succeeded to promote the Sunday-school movement upon organised lines in Spain and Portugal. The grip of Rome upon these lands is yet, alas! too firm. Aid, however, is given

to such evangelical activities as do at present exist, in the shape of grants of Bibles, pictures, and lesson-leaflets, to the great encouragement of the workers in the field.

Russia has been for several years one of the most interesting of the spheres of the Mission's work. The days have not long gone past when the little Sunday schools were obliged to meet in secret, in rooms darkened by drawn curtains which were carefully pinned lest any outside passer-by should discover the greatly daring inquirers into the Divine Word, in their unlawful assembly.

There were physical difficulties occasionally, and difficulties of climate and weather, as well as those of the administrative authorities.

Mr. Witte, who represented the Mission in Poland and South Russia, on one occasion reported snow so deep that the moujiks (peasants) had to climb out of their houses through the chimneys, and enter them in the same manner.

One day he started off in a small country waggon to cross the wide and lonely steppe to a distant village. They travelled on through the night, hoping to reach their destination some time next morning. The distance between villages is often very great in Russia, and the vast intervening steppes or forests are extremely lonely. When they had got some distance on their journey the night came on, and Mr. Witte found that the driver had forgotten to bring a lantern. By the light of the stars they made their way as best

they could over the boundless plain, until on a sudden there came a jolt and a crash, and they found themselves thrown out upon the ground. Their waggon had tumbled into a pit, dragging the poor horses with it.

Mr. Witte and the driver being unable alone to put matters right, started off to get help at the nearest village, which was three hours' journey distant. They returned with men, ropes, spades, and horses, and by the light of flaring torches they succeeded in extricating the two horses and the waggon.

The Sunday-school pioneer missionary must be prepared to meet with all kinds of people in his adventurous wanderings. The same narrator tells of the peasant-population of a district near the mouth of the river Dniester, in the extreme south-west corner of the land of the Tsar, that "they live and dress in a very simple manner. The food consists chiefly of a meal pudding, which they turn out and eat on a cloth spread on the floor, sitting cross-legged, and using their fingers."

These glimpses of the men at work will give the reader some idea of the adverse conditions under which some of the twenty-three missionaries supported by the Continental Committee pursue their vocation. Their letters home to the Sunday School Union frequently make piquant reading.

There are serious intellectual difficulties also. There are so very few who are capable of teaching children even the elements of Scripture truth.

The convert has himself so very much to learn that the thought of attempting to teach others strikes dismay into his mind. It is so different in Great Britain, where "from a child" there is a considerable knowledge of the letter of the Word. There is in Russia practically no knowledge of the Bible among the masses of the population. The Bible is not read. The common religious literature consists of impossible legends of the "saints." There is a sale for these among such of the moujiks as can read, but for nothing else. Even when persons belonging to the more intelligent classes are converted, they do not know in the least how to conduct a school. They need the most patient instruction in the simplest matters of Sunday-school organisation and work. But they are usually willing and even eager to learn, in the all too rare event of there being anybody available to instruct them.

Pastor Fetler began in St. Petersburg by establishing a Bible-study class for the training of teachers and Christian workers on Tuesday evenings. The International Series of Lessons is used, and with blackboard and chalk the Pastor ministers to the pathetic eagerness of the large assembly that attends week by week.

In the same room—the ballroom of the palace of the Princess Lieven, lent at that time for such admirable uses—the writer received a deputation of boys of the Sunday school. It was in the afternoon at the close of the lesson that the lads

gathered round and began to chatter in Russian, the friendliest of smiles upon their faces.

"What are the boys saying?" I inquired of Pastor Fetler, who acted as Superintendent.

"They are sending a message to England by you," he replied.

"I wish I were not so ignorant as to be unable to understand it," I rejoined.

"They want you to thank the English Sunday School Union and the boys and girls and teachers who contribute, and especially the Continental Committee and Mr. Waters, for sending me here to St. Petersburg to carry on Sunday-school work."

"That I will gladly do," I said. "The English Sunday scholars will be delighted to receive their message."

"Many of these boys and girls have given their hearts and lives to the Lord Jesus," Mr. Fetler continued. "See, they bring their decision-cards to the table. I receive a few every Sunday."

Mr. Fetler took up one of the cards and translated it for my benefit. The boy had written the strange Russian characters in a full, round hand, and had filled up the blank spaces with his name and address. Therein he had declared his faith in the atoning Saviour, his determination to follow and obey Him, and his further decision to have nothing to do with vodka (the Russian intoxicating drink) or tobacco.

The earnest little company of teachers were

clearly enjoying a happy reaping season. The hearts of the scholars appeared to open to the messages of grace as the flowers open to the morning sunshine.

At the present time there are in Russia alone about 250 Sunday schools, with an attendance of 36,000 children—a state of affairs that is most gratifying. The work in Russia is in its infancy, but it is rapidly growing, and might develop with even greater rapidity if the Mission were equipped with more ample funds.

Our survey began in Ludgate Hill, under the shadow of St. Paul's, and running over Europe finishes in Morskaja, that noble thoroughfare in St. Petersburg that lies under the shadow of St. Isaac's Cathedral, and within sound of the deep rich music of its bells. Thus the soul of Charles Waters went out into all the world in holy endeavour to win the world for Christ. In the "Continental Mission" he might fittingly have been called the Bishop of Europe.

CHAPTER VI.

I.B.R.A.—THE GREAT IDEA.

HE opening years of the nineteenth century saw the initiation and expansion of the work of the British and Foreign Bible Society in the circulation of the Scriptures. The closing years of that century saw the inception and expansion of the International Bible Reading Association under the controlling genius and direction of one man.

To produce Bibles is good; to circulate them far and wide is better; to induce the public to read their Bibles, and to help them to understand what they read, is surely best of all. Thirty years ago Mr. Waters set himself to teach the young people of Christendom to read the Bible regularly, intelligently, systematically, and to their spiritual profit and enrichment. Without the slightest pecuniary recompense he toiled on year after year in this glorious service, glad of heart in the consciousness that his labour was not in vain. To the patient

development of this beneficent Association he brought both wisdom and enthusiasm in abundant measure. It was his *magnum opus.* Every other duty of his life, every other sphere of Christian work—and he occupied many others—were all subordinated to the imperative and increasing claims of this. He thought and he toiled until he had girdled the earth from east to east again with an exceeding great army of Bible-readers.

"Bring me the Book," said Sir Walter Scott, as he lay upon his death-bed.

"What book?" inquired his son-in-law, who stood by.

"There is but one Book!" replied the poet.

There was but one Book to Charles Waters. The Book of books was to him a tree of life. "The leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations." This fact, demonstrated by centuries of experience, he spent his life with amazingly unselfish devotion in making known. It was a poignant distress to him that any youth or maiden should grow up and enter life in ignorance of the boundless resources of prudent counsel, of courage and strength, of hope and peace, and purity and comfort, contained in the Word of the living God. The formalism of much that passes for true religion, the neglect of religious ordinances by vast multitudes mainly through ignorance of their value, the possibility that large numbers of the boys and girls now under Christian influence in the Sunday schools might ultimately pass out to swell the

hosts of the irreligious, these things produced in his mind the conviction that the only counteractive and preventive of these calamities was an effort to secure a better acquaintance with the truths and the spirit of the Bible, and a more widespread practice of consulting its pages. The results that have followed have already shown that he was right.

Mr. Waters shall tell in his own words the origin of the International Bible Reading Association:—

"In 1879 a resolution was passed by the Sunday School Union appointing a Committee to consider what action could be taken to foster more definitely the spiritual work of Sunday-school teaching. At the first meeting of this Committee several suggestions were submitted by the present writer, and among them the formation of an organisation to promote the regular use of the 'Home Readings' of the International Lessons Series. This was the first seedling, but some other propositions were considered of greater importance, and so for the time being no growth appeared. In October 1881 a suggestion was made by Mr. Benjamin Clarke, in *Young England*, that the readers should use the 'Home Readings.' About seventy had responded to this suggestion, when it was realised that there was a necessity for some specially qualified agency for the development of this effort, and it was then resolved that the work of organisation be put into the hands of the Committee before mentioned.

"It was late in November that the Committee began the consideration of plans, and arrangements were made for the issue of circulars to Sunday schools and Unions at home and abroad. It was decided to prepare a Membership Card and to form branches with local Secretaries to enrol members."

Of this Committee Mr. Waters was appointed the Secretary. The scheme was announced in the *Sunday School Chronicle* and other papers. Instant success rewarded the enthusiasm of these pioneers. The result was electrical. The response was widespread. Applications for membership poured in to the offices. The first printing order for cards was 5000, but this stock was exhausted in about two months; and by the end of the year upwards of 10,000 persons were uniting daily in Bible-reading and prayer under the plan. Early, too, in this year came an inquiry from America, and the first member in the United States was enrolled.

But this success was as nothing to what followed in the succeeding years. In 1883 the membership had leaped up to nearly 30,000; in 1886 to 100,000; and by the close of the century the figures had reached the huge total of 690,000.

The success of the movement proved that it had been planned and developed with consummate skill. Nothing had been overlooked. Sunday-school teachers hailed it with delight. It gave just the assistance they needed in the study of the lesson.

The appeal to the ordinary Bible-reader was irresistible, and to the non-reader very tempting and persuasive; the way was made so easy and so advantageous.

The annual contribution required of the members placed it within reach of the very poorest. The card of membership was always of a tasteful and attractive design, being printed in gold and colours. The portion of Scripture chosen for each day was judiciously brief, and selected with the utmost care because of its bearing upon the week's topic. The hints elucidating the reading were also extremely brief and exactly to the point. The reading circles were for the most part small and manageable; these were discreetly grouped into districts, and all were in direct communication with headquarters. The advertising, too, was conducted with judgment, and gave evidence of the vigilant direction of the master-mind. The whole movement was so human, too. There was the living personal touch felt in every part of this widespread organisation, and in this fact was probably the main secret of its success.

The systematic study of the Bible topically gave a new value to the sacred volume. The old idea of reading the Bible "through from cover to cover," though certainly better than selecting a chapter at random, was mechanical, and frequently unprofitable intellectually and spiritually. The books were not written in the order in which they are arranged. To converts in heathen lands such

reading produces bewilderment. The I.B.R.A. offered expert guidance.

"I am so glad you persuaded me to join," said one who after some pressing became a member. "I find it such a help. The notes are so good. It is so much better than rushing through a chapter without any thought."

In innumerable households the I.B.R.A. was the means of the establishment of that most sacred institution the family altar. Mr. Waters was continually receiving good news such as the following:—

"A gentleman in Newport had often been asked to join the Association, but had persistently refused. Now he sends his name without solicitation. He seldom read the Bible before, but after getting his card, proposed to his wife and children, who were among the first members, that they should get their Bibles and all read together before retiring."

Among the Piedmontese mountains in Northern Italy, in the town of San Morzano, there is preserved a New Testament as a trophy. A little girl was returning from school, and reading eagerly her Scripture portion as she walked. She was very fond of her daily readings.

"What have you got there?" inquired the priest sharply. He had met her unperceived, and stood blocking up the path in front.

"My little Bible, reverend father," said the child demurely, with a respectful curtsy.

"Your Bible? Who gave you a Bible? It isn't a fit book for you, or any child, to have," he answered.

The little girl closed the book, and her fingers pressed it very tightly as she half unconsciously drew herself back.

"Here, give it to me!" said the priest, snatching the book from her. "I will take charge of it."

She stood for a minute or two watching the black-robed figure as it passed on down the street, carrying away her beloved volume, and then bursting into a flood of tears, ran home and told her parents what had happened. Happily they were Protestants, and made a complaint to the police, and an officer was sent to the priest's house to compel him to give up the confiscated volume. The child has been given a new Bible, and the other book is preserved as a trophy.

Many English ministers have enthusiastically taken up the I.B.R.A. The Rev. J. Bradford of Leytonstone was one of the first to make it a practice to base his children's address on Sunday mornings upon a text selected from the week's readings. This method supplied a ready and interesting series of topics, and at the same time encouraged the congregation in their daily Bible-study.

In practice, other advantages of the Association's plan came more and more into prominence. Mr. Waters, in one of his letters, has pointed out that "the Association may be said to combine

in one, a Bible Society, Evangelical Alliance, and Home and Foreign Missionary Society." This was perfectly true. The proposal commended itself to believers in the Lord Jesus of every communion. In the study of the Bible and daily prayer there was a common meeting-ground for all varieties of Christian belief and worship. In prayer for each other the asperities of religious differences were softened and sweetened. The Association proved to be indeed a God-sent medium for the increasing not only of faith (its primary object) but also of brotherly love. However Martha may complain, how can Mary, sitting at the feet of Jesus and hearing His word, think harshly of her sister!

The Association became also a much prized bond of union between lonely ones away in the far ends of the world. Fountains began to bubble up in remote desolations; "the wilderness and the solitary place were made glad." Communications more thrilling than any wireless telegraphy were established between heart and heart, sundered by oceans and hemispheres. The tongue of the dumb, that had almost forgotten loving and gracious speech, began to sing.

"The dear little papers are very helpful indeed. I have sent one of my last quarter's to a dear sister who is far away on the prairies of America, and shall send this quarter's also."

From far Sumatra, under the fierce sun of the Equator, a Mission worker wrote: "The work is so hard here, as the natives are mostly Moham-

medans. It makes us feel near 'home' when we know our dear ones are reading the same portions and praying for us each day. We would feel so lonely out here if we had not Christ's love. The readings and notes have so helped and comforted me."

"Though we are far apart" (this respecting a friend in France) "we seemed to be drawn very near together by our daily reading. . . . Then came a sad time, and my friend passed away to the home beyond. I feel now, more than ever, that I cannot do without my I.B.R.A. leaflets. They still seem a bond between us, a bond to draw me yet nearer to the beautiful home."

CHAPTER VII.

THE COMING OF THE Y.P.S.C.E.

HEN the American mails bore to England the news of the establishment of Young People's Societies of Christian Endeavour in the Eastern States they brought a scheme that was destined to effect a revolution in the methods of Christian work among the young in these islands. "Mutual Improvement Societies" and "Literary Guilds" and "Penny Readings" were fated to fail as quite inadequate, and even the Christian Bands, fostered by the Sunday School Union under the guidance of Mr. Waters, were destined to undergo transformation, and a welcome revitalisation.

The Rev. E. G. Gange once said, "Christian Endeavour is the very best thing the United States ever sent across the Atlantic."

Whatever may be the future of the movement, and ministers and other Christian workers differ widely in their opinions as to its possible develop-

ments in view of changing social and ecclesiastical conditions, there can be but one opinion as to the value of the service this agency has rendered to religious work amongst the young in the course of the last quarter of a century, in practically every denomination of Evangelical Christians.

Like all human schemes, it has been held to be open to objection. Even its fundamental positions, the pledge, the committees, the succession of youthful "leaders," the obligation to "take some part," and the rest, have not met with unqualified approval. But there is no doubt that God has greatly used "C.E." to His glory, to the blessing of numberless souls, and to the reviving of His work in many places. It must therefore be considered appreciatively and sympathetically by its critics. Apart from the form and organisation, it was undoubtedly the mighty forward bound of an ardent enthusiasm. Millions of young hearts throughout the world, inspired by love to Christ, laid hold of it, and threw themselves into it as a practical expression of their allegiance to their Lord. How many times have the great C.E. Conventions experienced the thrill of a fresh consecration as the whole multitude in the presence of God has uttered forth—

> "The strength of youth we lay at Jesus' feet to-day,
> 'Tis loyalty, loyalty, loyalty to Christ!
> Arise to dare and do, ring out the watchword true
> Of loyalty, loyalty, yes, loyalty to Christ!"

As Mr. Waters took such a prominent part in

HARVEST THANKSGIVING SERVICE, ON THE SANDS, MARGATE.
(*Mr. Waters is seated in the centre of front row.*)

the introduction of C.E. to Great Britain it will be well to give a brief outline of what to many is well known, the story of the origin of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour.

On the first page of the first minute book of the first C.E. Society in the world are these words :—

"Young Christians may make mistakes in working for Christ. They make greater mistakes in not working for Him. No failure in making the attempt is so bad as to fail to make it."

The author of these sentences was the founder of the C.E. movement. The sentences themselves are the key of its mighty arch.

Dr. F. E. Clark, pastor in Williston, Portland, Maine, U.S.A., and his like-minded wife, invited the members of the Mizpah Circle of their church to tea one bitterly cold afternoon in early February 1881. On that evening the first Christian Endeavour pledge was signed by fifty-eight young men and women. The Rev. A. W. Potts, a Congregational pastor in Crewe, hearing of the American Society, adopted it for his young people, thus forming the first British society. Dr. Clark came to England in May 1888 by invitation of the Sunday School Union Council to explain the movement, and a Committee was appointed to further C.E. in this country, Charles Waters being the first Hon. Secretary. The I.B.R.A. had then been in existence about six years. Eighteen C.E. Societies were registered in the first year, thirty-six in the year following, and so by leaps and bounds until

the three kingdoms were covered with them, and other lands were following the British example.

In 1890, Dr. Clark paid a second visit to England, the annual Convention being held that year in the parent town of Crewe.

In 1893, and again in 1894, Dr. Clark on a journey round the world again visited this country. At a ministerial breakfast in the Metropolitan Tabernacle Lecture Hall, in December 1894, he was given a public welcome. On the evening of that day Mr. Waters, the "statesman of the movement," presided over a mass meeting in the Tabernacle. The area and the great galleries were crowded with enthusiastic young people.

"Looking at this great sight before me and around me," said Mr. Waters in his opening speech, "my mind goes back to the first appearance, only six years ago, of Dr. Clark upon a London platform. I shall always be glad to recollect that that platform was the platform of the Sunday School Union. I very well remember that meeting, when our dear friend came there as a stranger. There was not one face he knew. And he was unknown to us. . . . Now what is this meeting? Why are you here, gathered without posters, handbills, or advertisement? Is there here a long list of lords, baronets, knights, to adorn the platform, or some Demosthenes whose eloquence has attracted you? Not at all! You have gathered to demonstrate your love for this cause and for its honoured founder."

The instant and amazing success of C.E. was

certainly an incalculable blessing to religious work throughout the country. The young manhood and young womanhood of the Churches rallied to the standard in their thousands, and threw themselves with new fervour into the "good fight of faith." C.E. even penetrated within the precincts of the House of Commons. A C.E. member of Parliament sent the following message to a mass meeting or "Rally," as it is called, of Endeavourers in the East End:—

"There is a magnificent opportunity for C.E. work. The special temptations to young people in London require a special effort to counteract and defeat them. I believe the C.E. Societies will save hundreds and thousands of young people from ruin and shame, and will build up their lives in the beauty and strength of Christian character!"

One of the favourite songs of Endeavourers has ever been—

"True-hearted, whole-hearted, faithful and loyal,
King of our lives, by Thy grace we will be!
Under the standard exalted and royal,
Strong in Thy strength, we will battle for Thee.
True-hearted, whole-hearted, fullest allegiance
Yielding henceforth to our glorious King;
Valiant endeavour and loving obedience
Freely and joyously now would we bring."

Mr. Waters surrendered himself with the fervour of an enthusiast to the visitation of the churches in London and the provinces to advocate the claims of the new enterprise. Invitations and inquiries poured in to the offices of the Union from ministers

and churches of all denominations seeking information and begging for somebody to go and explain the working of this novel organisation. One fruitful example of these calls that made great demands upon the Secretary's time and strength must suffice.

It is mentioned in the first issue of *Christian Endeavour*, a monthly magazine published in the interests of the movement. The magazine appeared in February 1893, and in the first issue is the report of a meeting held in the Congregational Church, Crouch End, Dr. Alfred Rowland, the pastor, in the chair, to consider the formation of a C.E. Society. Mr. Waters explained the object and principles of the movement. Questions were asked, and answered by Mr. Waters, and a society was formed.

Dr. Rowland's experience of the first meeting of the new Society in his church was related in June of the same year, at a great meeting in the City Temple, London. Mr. Waters' visit was not without fruit.

"At our first meeting," he said, "I asked for members, and to my joy about sixty or seventy were at once enrolled. Immediately after the singing of a hymn I asked, it must be admitted with some hesitation, that one after another should lead in prayer—those who had never perhaps prayed aloud in public before. To my great delight and surprise, in the course of a few minutes no less than twenty-three trembling young voices

were heard offering supplication at the throne of grace."

It is not too much to say that in such meetings as these many thousands of young believers have enjoyed a fresh baptism of the Spirit of God and a new inflow of the Divine life; and hundreds of pastors have been strangely moved with joy and gratitude to God for what they have seen and heard among the young people of their congregations.

Three years later, in 1896, a Hymnal was issued for the use of the C.E. Societies, Rev. J. B. Morgan, then Chairman of the C.E. Council, being the general editor, and Rev. Carey Bonner, the well-known Secretary of the S.S.U., the musical editor. C.E., like Christianity itself, was begun, and has advanced to its present greatness in the midst of joyous music and praise.

The hand of C.E. has often been stretched forth to aid Foreign Missions. On the broad waters of the Congo River in Central Africa there floats a Mission steamer of which the British Endeavourers may well be proud. It is called the *Endeavour*, and was the gift to the Baptist Missionary Society by the members of the C.E. Societies connected with that denomination.

When Mr. Waters, through pressure of other duties, relinquished the secretariat of the C.E. Council, he was invited to become first the Treasurer and in 1898 the President, which honourable positions he duly held.

It is not necessary to outline the underlying principles or the methods of this well-known and flourishing organisation. It is serving two great purposes in the young religious life of the nation, protective and preparatory. As the groynes on the seashore break the might of the inrolling waves and guard the coast against insidious erosion, so has C.E. been a breakwater to many a young life against the encroachments of ungodliness and sin. As the parade-ground trains the recruit for the efforts of the distant campaign, so many a young soldier of the Cross has acquired through C.E. more efficient capabilities of service in the great warfare between heaven and hell.

CHAPTER VIII.

I.B.R.A.—"ENLARGE THE PLACE OF THY TENT."

HE tremendous success of the I.B.R.A., its membership increasing at the rate of nearly forty thousand per annum with surprising regularity for about twenty years, is the clearest evidence that it was managed with first-class business ability baptized in the fire of the Holy Ghost.

"We expect to add another ten miles of new members to our line of readers next year. It is now thirty miles in length," said Mr. Waters at the close of 1886, when the membership stood at 110,000. This would mean (the new recruits standing closely shoulder to shoulder) about 39,000 persons.

"We have done it—and more!" said he, twelve months later. "Our solid line (British readers alone) would now be forty-five miles long!"

Manchester district was the first home district to reach ten thousand members. At the end of

the first ten years of effort the membership totalled 350,000 daily readers.

The movement was self-propagating in two ways. When a member removed to a neighbourhood in which there were no other members, it usually followed that a new branch was started. When a non-member entered a circle of Bible-reading friends in a new locality, he often returned to his old neighbourhood carrying with him the glowing embers to kindle a new fire.

A young lady visited Jersey, and there became enrolled as a member. On her return home she spread the good news, and ultimately succeeded in gathering a branch of fifty members.

"I feel now," she said, "that I am doing at least something for my Lord."

A bright little monthly, the *Silver Link*, was issued in January 1892 as a medium of communicating the news of the organisation throughout the membership. Mr. Waters, under the *nom de plume* "The Man at the Wheel," contributed a monthly series of interesting notes.

"I cannot tell you what a pleasure it is to me," he wrote in the first number, "to be associated with so great a body of Bible-readers; and the grand success of the work, while it brings increasing labour, multiplies the joy a thousandfold."

An early number of the *Silver Link* contained a portrait of Mr. Waters, and as vast multitudes of the members of the I.B.R.A. had never seen the Secretary's face, the reception of the picture created

MR. CHARLES WATERS.
(From a Photograph by Elliott & Fry.)

in many places the liveliest excitement. From Africa a reader expressed his gratification thus:—

"We had not finished talking when the post-boy came in with the papers. I eagerly opened the *Silver Link*, when, lo! the portrait was seen. I was so much pleased to see it. What a pity it could not speak when I addressed it!"

In the year 1890 the I.B.R.A. undertook to provide funds to maintain a Sunday-school missionary in India. Dr. J. L. Phillips[1] was the first representative, and on his death the Rev. R. Burges was appointed. This branch of the work is mentioned in a later chapter.

The adoption of a little silver badge in 1895 gave every member a further opportunity, by wearing it, of advertising the Association. It was intended to be worn in the buttonhole, or by ladies as a brooch, and was in the form of a small Greek cross, an open Bible in the centre, and the four initials, I.B.R.A., upon the four arms. It is the only "cross" in all the amazing breadth of the enterprise. All the rest is "crown"—a crown of honour to the memory of the promoter and director, Charles Waters; a crown of joy to all who are privileged to take any share in the working of the Association; and a crown of blessing upon the head of every devout reader of all the million of them, in every part of the habitable earth.

This gracious Scripture net "enclosed a great multitude of fishes, and for all there were so many

[1] See *Life of Dr. Phillips* (Sunday School Union).

yet was not the net broken," nor the Sacred Book found unsatisfactory. There were all varieties, too, young, adult, and aged, of all classes and conditions in life; showing in their unanimous and enthusiastic appreciation of the scheme how marvellously adapted the Divine Word is to all the children of men.

Soldiers? Yes. There are any number of testimonies. "A little band of soldiers in Egypt meet daily at noon to read the daily portions, and for prayer," writes the Egyptian Secretary. From Sierra Leone, West Africa, comes news of a similar practice. "The soldiers at Mount Auriol barracks, eleven in number, take part in the I.B.R.A. Some of them are very devoted. One has just bought a Bible to enable him to keep up his reading. He said he used to borrow from his comrades, and when they saw his earnestness they came to call him 'the preacher.'" Here is an interesting extract from one who marched in the expedition against the King of Ashanti:—

"We had a long march through Ashanti land. I saw a great deal of misery in Kumassi, and witnessed with sorrow many sacrifices to heathen idols. The war is over, and not a shot was fired. We took the king prisoner. He had much gold about his body. His sandals, even, were decorated with gold."

I.B.R.A. soldiers in Kimberley during the siege could not say "not a shot was fired." When the letters of the branch secretaries reached Mr. Waters

they were found to contain many exciting incidents of that memorable time. From a barrack-room in the home-land came the cheery word: "When those of us in the room who belong to the King's army as well as Queen Victoria's get downcast by reason of trials and temptations, there is always a verse in our morning reading that helps us all through the day."

Sailors? Yes. The Cardiff Secretary mentions the case of a young fellow clamouring for his card and *Hints* before his boat leaves the docks for far Australia. A sailor lad writes on board a battleship: "I still read my daily portion . . . but as for getting ten more to do the same, it is impossible. I don't think there are more than two of us in the whole ship's company that look at the Bible." Poor lad! Cut adrift from Christian sympathy and help, what a boon to him was his I.B.R.A. membership!

Miss Agnes Weston greatly helped Mr. Waters' work, and so did the British and Foreign Sailors' Society; and many a good ship on the high seas carried the daily readings and thousands of devout users of them.

Colliers? Yes. From Risca, Mon., comes this bit of good news: "One of our members, a collier, takes his *Hints* with him into the underground workings, and then gets some of his mates to join him in the readings. He tells me he finds such a delight in the readings that he wants others to have the same benefit." The Secretary of another

branch is himself a miner, and "distributes the *Hints* at the bottom of the coal-pit." Many earnest Christians spend much of their lives in the mines, and find the daily Bible-readings a help and comfort amid the darkness and danger of their work.

Schools? Yes. The head teacher of a public day school near London enlisted about forty of the brightest pupils of the school in membership. The Inspector of Public Schools in Canada in the year 1888 applied for a list of the readings with a view to their being used in the public schools of Toronto. "We'd been grumbling because the gravies were not rich and we had plain food," wrote a pupil in a Jamaica High School. "That night we had the lesson on Daniel's refusing to eat anything but plain food, and looking better than those who ate of the best." A branch was formed in a Boys' Reformatory in Belfast, and another in a Working Lads' Club in Edinburgh. In the latter a wonderful work of grace was effected as the result; the lads, one after the other, coming out in happy decision for Christ. "A little boy during the cold weather," Mr. Waters once told an audience, "finding it hard to get up in time to read his portion in the morning, prayed earnestly to God to help him to get out of bed a little earlier."

Colleges? Yes. "Each day we have assembled in little groups by three or four," writes the student-secretary of the branch in Westminster College, London, "to read the passage together, and to have a few moments of united prayer."

Police? Yes. "I have pondered on the Daily Readings through the dark hours of the night, and so have been brought very close to God," wrote a Manchester policeman.

Convicts? Yes. "I have another prison branch at the Wanpum Prison. There are twenty-five members, and the Chaplain is the Branch Secretary." Thus reports Mrs. Salter of Chicago.

Working-men? Yes. "I have made it my duty to read the portions to my workmates," was the declaration of a St. Albans labourer.

Emigrants? Yes. A friend from Roose in Scotland sent the following: "We have several young men who have gone to other lands. . . . They owe their conversion to the I.B.R.A."

Postal officials? Yes. In the year 1899, Mr. W. Phillips, the postmaster at Merthyr Tydvil, reported that "over thirty members have been enrolled, including every member of the staff from postmaster to telegraph messenger."

Factory workers? Yes. In a City workroom the Secretary reported that every girl had become a member.

And so the story might go on, an endless beam of light passing through almost every calling under the sun.

In its world-wide sweep the movement is equally interesting. The United States managers report that "from Maine to California, and from Dakota to Florida, the land possesses organised branches." The I.B.R.A. reached

Australia in 1883. It was introduced by the Victorian Sunday School Union. Speedily, South Australia, Queensland, New South Wales, and New Zealand in turn formed centres. The continent and islands under the Southern Cross have had numerous branches for many years. At the Annual Meeting in the City Temple in 1894, when the aggregate membership had reached half a million, a speaker said that in Fiji, where only a few score years ago the people were cannibals, you can now scarcely find fifty huts where the Bible is not regularly read and daily prayer offered.

From Samoa, where in 1907 there were five thousand members, although but recently these islands also were the scenes of idolatry and cannibalism, the Secretary writes: "The cards are widely distributed in the South Seas in all the islands. They are used in the Tokelau group, in eight similar groups in the Ellice Islands, in five islands of the Gilbert group, and in New Guinea, besides being used throughout Samoa."

The Boers of South Africa, the Basutos, and the Kaffirs possess the membership cards and the readings in their own languages. In remote St. Helena, the prison of the Emperor Napoleon, there is a branch with a membership of 120. In the heart of Mexico a Presbyterian minister supervises a flourishing company, while from distant Argentina comes the following: "Our Annual Meeting was a great success. In the evening, the

packed congregation represented a dozen or so different nationalities."

Even in Constantinople there is a group of devout readers who use the English card. The Turkish authorities were terrified when they read in their own tongue such revolutionary titles as "Encouraging the people," "Wicked devices frustrated," "Sorrow in the Palace." They therefore prohibited the further issue of the Turkish card in the year 1893. That did not prevent, however, the fall of the powers of darkness that for so many years misruled the land from the Yildiz Kiosk.

The foregoing rapid and very incomplete glance at the scope of the operations of the Association will give a general idea of the work that filled the brain, heart, and hands of this consecrated man for upwards of a quarter of a century.

"Gazing, we see the oncoming hosts of the Lord," said the Rev. Carey Bonner, the eloquent General Secretary of the Sunday School Union, in a Convention meeting held in Toronto. "Among them there marches a great battalion nearly a million strong, whose soldiers, though gathered from north, south, east, and west, yet tread step by step with the tramp of a conquering army. Who are they? See the banner waving at their head. That banner bears the device of the Book of books—an open book. Underneath are the mystic initials—I.B.R.A. They are lit by the glow of God's daybreak! Scan them well. They stand for an organisation whose interests I

believe God has bound up in the bundle of life with those of the Sunday school."

The following quinquennial comparison of the I.B.R.A. totals will show at a glance the enormous expansion of the Association :—

Year.	Membership.	Year.	Membership.
1882 . .	11,000	1897 . .	620,000
1887 . .	158,000	1902 . .	780,000
1892 . .	400,000	1907 . .	950,000

In presenting to the Annual Meeting the 1907 Report, Mr. Waters said: "We reckon only those who are using English cards, and 950,000 cards were issued last year. But we may say that certainly there are more than 1,000,000 who are daily readers of our portions, because there are some 60,000 other members using foreign cards who are not included. We thank God for all that has passed."

CHAPTER IX.

I.B.R.A.—THE SILVER JUBILEE.

"OU ought to be the happiest man alive! You have given to the world in the I.B.R.A. a movement of great utility in Christian work and Bible-study. For a quarter of a century you have been permitted to see it grow and develop under your unselfish and magnificent administration. A million readers rise up in one great army to call you 'Blessed.'" Thus wrote, in the spring of the year 1907, the General Secretary of the World's Sunday School Association from America, to the revered founder, on the occasion of the celebration of the Silver Jubilee.

There were thousands of similar congratulatory messages from less prominent persons, but they all expressed the same appreciation and affection.

"No one but the Lord of the harvest can know the vast extent of the endless chain of influence Mr. Waters has been the means of setting up,

nor of the number of stars to be added to his crown, when so many of the Redeemed will claim him as their spiritual father," said an earnest fellow-worker in New York city.

A list of places from which such testimonies as the above were sent would alone fill several pages. Let it suffice to say that every continent of the globe was abundantly represented, and islands of the seas, near and far, innumerable, and probably every denomination of Protestant Christendom. This was only what might be expected inasmuch as the Association had at that date (the number has since increased) branches in seventy different countries, and the membership cards were printed in over thirty languages!

"A Babel in tongues," said Mr. Waters on the occasion, "but united in spirit and in purpose."

The celebration meetings were held very appropriately in the Metropolitan Tabernacle. Next to the presentation to Mr. Waters, the most interesting feature was the International Conference held in the smaller hall in the afternoon.

"I come from *Samoa*, an island in the South Pacific," said the first speaker, Rev. J. H. Morley. "We have had the gospel there for seventy-seven years. They were then a heathen people. . . . We have had the I.B.R.A. for fifteen or sixteen years. . . . In every one of our Samoan homes, as far as I know, we have family prayers, morning and evening. The evening prayer was a part of the old heathen worship. . . . Upon this old foundation

is now built Christian family prayer. . . . We have some five thousand cards sent us every year. . . . That is my testimony."

"When I went up to Darjeeling, a corner of the Himalayan range in *Northern India*," said the second speaker, the widow of Dr. Rouse, "I found a great many people who did not read their Bibles. . . . I began to work. . . . When I left there, the 'Darjeeling and scattered members' branch had two hundred members."

Herr G. Nesse from *Norway* brought a cordial message from the Norwegian Sunday School Union, which circulates about four thousand cards.

One of the most striking of the reports was that from remote *Raratonga*, that brilliantly verdant island of the New Hebrides group in the South Pacific Ocean, near to Erromanga, where the heroic pioneer martyr, John Williams yielded up his life for Christ's sake. Mr. H. P. Hall reported a revival in Raratonga, and the I.B.R.A. cards are more fully used there than in any place, for the portions are read twice every day, in the morning in English, which the younger natives are rapidly learning, and at evening prayers in the native language "for the sake of those who cannot understand."

"These brown Polynesians in those eleven islands thank you for . . . sending out cards to them. . . . They have always been fond of reading their Bibles, and they love them all the more because of the cards and the preparations you have made for them."

The lady from *Persia* who appeared next (Miss

Zeytoon) did not speak, except "with her face." She smiled, and bowed, and blushed, in acknowledgment of the hearty greeting she received. There are members of the Association in Ispahan and Hamadan.

"I am sorry I cannot speak English," said Herr E. Wessling of *Sweden*, who reported that twenty-four years previously the I.B.R.A. germ was wafted across the North Sea, and took root in his fatherland. The number of members had reached the high total of 36,000. The Swedish population of America also, a separate branch, have a membership of upwards of 8000. Finland and Russia also sent messages.

"My colleagues have left in my hands," said Herr Wessling, "the trust of expressing their feelings of admiration and regard for you and your great work."

The greetings of *Ceylon* were voiced by the headmistress of the Girls' High School, Colombo, Miss Ledger, who reported several highly encouraging developments:

"One of our original members was a West African. He came to Ceylon to the Technical College with a scholarship. When he had gone through his scholarship course, he went back to West Africa to take up a Government appointment. He went back as a member of the I.B.R.A. He has written to tell me that four branches have been started in his native town."

Herr J. G. Lehmann of Cassel, a gentleman well

known in religious circles in England, was the next to appear. He spoke as a personal member of over twenty years' standing, and also on behalf of "30,000 grateful Bible-readers in *Germany*." German-speaking people in Switzerland, Austria, Hungary, Bohemia, Bosnia, Roumania, and Russia also use the German cards and leaflets.

"It is a wonderful work," said he. "We do not find many men who will stick and hold on to one thing, and carry it through, and who will give their whole time and energy evening after evening, and week after week, as Mr. Waters has done. He deserves all honour and gratitude; and it is a great pleasure and honour to me to express all this in the name of the German Branch."

From the "Silver Republic" of *Argentina*, through which flows the "Silver River," came the Rev. F. Elder to the "Silver Jubilee" to convey the congratulations of the Argentinians, and to commend the systematic Bible-reading method of the Association:

"A man who is not familiar with the Bible buys a copy. We can scarcely understand his difficulties. He thinks he must begin to read it like any other book. He commences in Genesis, and he goes on, and gets into the mazes of some of those chapters that are so difficult to understand, and he says, 'I cannot see anything in this to help my soul. I cannot understand this.' We put into his hands a card of the I.B.R.A. He finds that there is a certain subject taken. He goes right

through different parts of the Bible, and in that way he is greatly helped."

From *South Africa*, *Brazil*, and *China* also came messages of appreciation.

The principal feature of the magnificent public meeting that followed in the great Tabernacle in the evening, under the chairmanship of Judge Willis, was the presentation to Mr. Waters of his portrait in oils (life size), two albums, the first containing an Address from his colleagues and many subscribers, a record of the history of the I.B.R.A., and a statement of its sphere of operation in the Jubilee year; the second album containing a selection of extracts from letters written by those who wished to bear testimony to the value of the work of the Association at home and abroad; a cheque for three hundred pounds; and—of course—a Bible!

Sir Francis Belsey (then Mr. Belsey), Chairman of the Sunday School Union Council, appropriately made the presentation, briefly reciting the facts respecting the origin of the Association. He told of "the God-given idea" that Mr. Waters and his Committee had so happily developed to such a vast extent.

"These glorious results, I venture without hesitation to say, have been mainly due to the unremitting devotion of one Christian man. When I describe to you some of the labours that he has attempted to discharge, and succeeded in discharging; when I remind you that he was himself professionally engaged in an occupation which

demanded the most anxious care and the largest contribution of time and energy; when I remind you that he went home from his private room in the Bank to take up this earnest work for young souls, and to give himself often to the midnight hour to that work, you will see that all we may say to-night and all we may do is a well-deserved tribute to one who has rendered invaluable services for the Cross of Christ and the Word of God. Our dear friend Charles Waters has given his life to this great movement."

The portrait in oils was executed by Mr. Hillyard Swinstead, an artist whose pictures have for many years found an honoured place in the Exhibitions of the Royal Academy. A replica of the painting hangs in the principal Committee Room of the offices of the Sunday School Union in London, where it will familiarise future generations with the face and figure of the founder of the I.B.R.A.

The enthusiasm of the great audience found vent in a stirring demonstration of affection as Mr. Waters stepped forward to receive the love-gifts of his friend and followers. With that remarkable control of his inward emotions that has always been a source of wonder to all who knew him, he faced the cheering throng, who again and again broke forth into fresh applause. When silence was at length restored, he made a characteristically modest speech expressive of his gratitude for their love.

"I can assure you, dear friends, there has been no self-sacrifice on my part," said he. "It is true that I have given a very great deal of time and labour to the work of this Association. But I have enjoyed it! I could show you bundles of letters which have come to me from persons in this country and in many other countries. Who could not enjoy a service which brings such expressions as these? I am thankful that I have been spared these twenty-five years to do this work, because in the work there has been a true and lasting pleasure."

And then arose the voices of the assembled thousands in the inspiring strains of the hymn—

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

CHAPTER X.

"HANDS ACROSS THE SEAS."

"HIS great friend of my Italy," were the words used by Professor Filippini of Rome, in writing of Mr. Waters and his work in its relation to foreign lands.

It was only one of many affectionate tributes to the value and spirit of that work. Mr. Waters' foreign correspondence during the past twenty-seven years or more was prodigious in volume and extent. He left behind a vast accumulation of letters from abroad, all carefully and methodically arranged according to date and place, as his custom was.

Sir Francis Belsey has written: "The correspondence of the I.B.R.A., world-wide in extent, and more voluminous in quantity than one could credit," was not "dealt with through the stenographer and typist. He thought his correspondents would miss the heart with the handwriting, and think the reply cold and unfriendly if it came in

type; and so for many and many a night he sat till another day was beginning before he dropped his pen and sought his rest."

There was occasionally humour as well as pathos in the letters he received. Here are selections from one from the West Coast of Africa. It is perfectly genuine:—

"DEAR SECRETARY,—Hoping you have been well, together with all families. I have received your esteemed letter of the 26, together with card circulars and *Hints* on the daily portion. Many thanks for same. . . . I am in the most lonesome jungle in the world. . . . The jungle is a tremendous one. . . . The natives have continous hatred blood-thirsty for us since the last insurrection. The British demolished them in great quantity therefore they have an indictive feeling for us.

"They are a very industrious people. I never come across with such. They are the best plantain and banana cultivator. You could hardly go to a hamlet where you will not see such like things. They cultivate yams, cucumber, rice, cassava, oranges, pineapples. They manufacture rubber, palm-oil, palm-wine, bamboo stools, bamboo umbrellas. . . . After the cutting of the rice . . . you will hardly have your night rest . . . you will be hearing all sorts of drum and dancing. . . . Can you procure for me one rook rifle and it bullets as the deer are numerous here and the bush fowls. . . . We went on the 24, to ambushed buffaloes; after

succeeded in getting two . . . we lose our way in the jungle. . . . Thanks for Providence or we would have been swallow by Boar Constractor. We had a pleasant swim 1 mile and half swamp swimming, the depth is two feet deep. We drank palm-wine in quantum. . . . Would you like to have any butterflies as they are numerous here, but I have no net for to catch them. I used to caught them with my hat, but it wings used to broke."

A touching little epistle from a young lady in the British West Indies runs:—

"I hereby write to let you know I am a daily reader of your helpful *Hints*, also a member of your great company, the I.B.R.A. I cannot say what it has done for me. I never found my Bible so interesting before. Now, in the mornings, I cannot set my mind to do anything until I have read my daily portion. . . . I think you received my name as Elizabeth Permilla C——; but as I am called 'Betsy' for a pet name, I much prefer you to think and to pray for me as plain little Betsy C——. I am eighteen years of age."

Mr. Waters paid several visits to the continent of Europe, and to the United States, in the interests of Sunday-school work and of the I.B.R.A. His first visit to Sweden and Norway took place in 1887. Among other pleasant memories, he has left on record the following:—

"In Stockholm I spent a few hours with Mr.

A. Palm, who has long been one of the most active and useful Sunday-school workers in that country. We went into the royal palace, and were even shown the bedrooms of the royal princes. There were many curiosities there; but the sight which interested me most was an illuminated text of Scripture which their mother, the Queen, had put up at the head of each of their beds. A little while ago I saw a copy of a letter written by one of these young men, Prince Oscar (the present King of Sweden), President of the Stockholm Y.M.C.A., which began thus: 'The Lord has been very good to us, and we have very much to thank Him for. He has graciously honoured our work by the conversion of many young men.' Would that all royal princes could use such language!"

In 1893, Mr. Waters was invited by the promoters of the World's Sunday School Convention, held in St. Louis, State of Missouri, in connection with a great Exhibition in that city, to address the delegates on the I.B.R.A. He has left a diary full of descriptive details of his tour, from which the following brief extracts were made. It will be observed that his master-passion is always in evidence in seeking out and examining in every place the methods and conditions of religious work among the young. These had greater attractions for him than the astonishing displays of the World's Fair in Chicago (which was held that year), or the awe-inspiring spectacle of Niagara, although he visited both in the course of his tour,

and wrote in his diary a lengthy description of the latter.

"A holiday in America! . . . Visitors from the other side have often suggested that I should go over, giving promises of attention, and even of 'a royal welcome.' . . .

"At 7.30 a.m. our train from New York arrived at Boston. . . . Called at the C.E. office, where I met Mr. W. Shaw, who has for some time been my correspondent. Together we visited among other places the State House of the Massachusetts Legislature, and proceeded to the gallery in the lantern (which was shaken by the high wind), from whence we had a good view over the city and harbour. . . .

"On returning to the office, Dr. Francis E. Clark had arrived from Vermont, having come up on purpose to meet me. Mr. J. Willis Baer also dined with us. . . ."

After visiting Albany, Niagara Falls, and Lewiston, the steamer was boarded for Toronto and Lake Ontario crossed.

". . . My friend M'Nab (his host) was so entirely intent on I.B.R.A. that beyond the street journeys I really saw nothing of Toronto. . . . I found him ready to commence an I.B.R.A. tour. . . . Our first visit was to Mr. R. Montgomery, the Secretary, who is Manager of a local Bank of Commerce. . . . I was interested in the elaborate arrangements of the safe, and the careful protection of the Cashier, who was entirely enclosed on all sides with wire netting over the top of his com-

partment, and the door leading into it locked. . . . In the evening a meeting of branch secretaries and others was held in Westminster Church, Dr. M'Tavish presiding. . . . The Ontario C.E. Union presented an address, to which I replied. . . . At 11.30 p.m. we started for Chicago."

On Sunday (in Chicago) he visited several Sunday schools, and examined the arrangement of the classes and facilities for instruction. He expresses surprise that in "Chicago Avenue Church" (built by Mr. D. L. Moody) he "found no separate premises for the Sunday school, although there were over a thousand scholars. A class of Chinamen was just dispersing as I arrived. The Principal of the Moody Institute conducted one of the adult classes."

"This is the fifth Sunday school I have seen on this visit, and my experience does not impress me with their superiority. Three of the five are under the chapel; and the best one has no classrooms except for primary classes."

The World's Convention in St. Louis was held in the great Music Hall of the Exposition Building. Mr. Waters read his paper on the I.B.R.A., which was well received, and created a fruitful interest in the plan among those present from all parts of the States. The homeward journey was made *via* Cincinnati and Washington, to New York, where his friends and fellow-workers, the Chaddock family, showed him much kindness. "Miss Chaddock has been a very earnest Secretary for the I.B.R.A.," he writes in his diary of the meeting.

A second visit to Scandinavia, on the invitation of the I.B.R.A. and the Swedish Sunday School Union, was made in 1904. On the way he attended meetings in Hamburg and Copenhagen. In the latter city arrangements were made for printing the I.B.R.A. cards in Danish.

"An hour after my arrival in the city, I was conducted to a meeting of teachers specially convened and well attended." A great united gathering of Sunday schools listened to an address from Mr. Waters on the following Sunday, and sent their very warm salutation to the Sunday schools in England. In company with Rev. C. S. Hull, he attended the Triennial Scandinavian Conference in Stockholm, which extended over six days. General Rappe was Chairman of the Conference. Prince and Princess Bernadotte are associated with Sunday-school work in the capital.

"I must see Rome," said the great Apostle; and so said Mr. Waters when in May 1907 it was arranged to hold the World's Sunday School Convention in that city.

"Three motives were present in my mind," he wrote. "The first was that I might realise a long cherished desire to see the city. The second was to have the pleasure of greeting friends and correspondents from many countries. In the third place, there was the possibility of something being done to advance the work of the I.B.R.A."

His notes of the journey and the visit show that he greatly enjoyed the occasion. "I was pleased

to find myself located in the hotel with Rev. F. B. and Mrs. Meyer, Dr. Campbell Morgan, Mr. Belsey, Rev. Carey Bonner, and other good friends."

The comments Mr. Waters made on the places of interest visited by the party are well deserving of reproduction if space were available—the Catacombs, the Scala Santa, the Colosseum, the Forum, St. Peter's, the Vatican, and the rest. A visit to Naples, Pompeii, and Vesuvius followed, and in speaking of the excellence of the Neapolitan water supply he adds the following autobiographical particular :—

"I am really fond of water, without any admixture or addition. I have just completed fifty years of total abstinence from alcohol and tobacco, during which, both in health and sickness, at home, and in eleven different countries of Europe, as well as in Africa and America, I have drunk plain water, and have never owned a pipe. Wonderful to relate, I am yet alive!"

His second visit to the United States took place in June 1908. On this occasion an International (the word has by this time a familiar sound) Sunday School Convention was held in Louisville, Kentucky. Great Britain sent four representatives: Rev. Alfred Rowland, Chairman of the British Section of the International Lessons Committee; Rev. Frank Johnson, Editor of the *Sunday School Chronicle*; Mr. Frederic Taylor, Secretary of the Friends' First Day School Association; and Mr. Waters.

MR. W ATERS AT WORK IN HIS STUDY.

In 1909, an I.B.R.A. party, which included Mr. Waters, spent a delightful holiday in Switzerland. Reference has already been made to his camera and to the snapshots he took of impressive scenes. Some of the best of the views were reproduced on his return to England, and published in a dainty *Souvenir*. The opening sentences of this *Souvenir* are very characteristic :—

"The supreme object of the I.B.R.A. is to promote the study of God's revelation of Himself as given to us in the Scriptures. . . . Those who have entered most deeply into this Book are the best fitted to appreciate the wonders of the Book of Nature. It was in this spirit that a number of us united to spend a holiday in the beautiful country of Switzerland."

The beams of light and grace continually emanating from Old Bailey shot far across the world, and touched many a lonely, wild, and wicked spot in remote corners of the earth, illuminating the darkness, and sometimes transforming the inhabitants.

"The nearest Sunday schools are about 85 miles from where I am," writes a member, from the Transvaal. "There is no church here. . . . Unless I leave for a week . . . I never hear the Word preached."

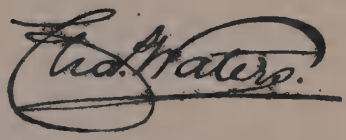
"This is a wild country," writes another, from the heart of New Mexico. "The people are all farmers and stock-raisers—very much scattered. The town has only some fourteen houses in it, and one of them is a grog saloon. But thank God, we

managed last year to build a church. . . . We have a lot to fight against. . . . Remember our little Branch in your prayers, for we need them. Revolvers are in more frequent use here than Bibles."

"A lady connected with my Branch," writes another secretary in North America, "took some of the cards to a country neighbourhood where the people were very rough—no church near them, no desire for one. . . . One woman living in sin at the time, was induced to take a card. That woman was converted. Through her influence the whole neighbourhood has been roused. She started a Sunday school in her own house, and it now numbers forty-seven. . . . Land has been given by a neighbour who formerly regarded neither God nor man, and steps are being taken to build a place of worship thereon."

CHAPTER XI.

OVER THE FAMILIAR SIGNATURE



"HERE I sit in my den, from which the sounds of the 'madding crowd' are shut out, and my ears are waiting for the messages which come from far and near, and which tell of progress and blessing in connection with our world-wide organisation." Thus wrote Charles Waters in the *Silver Link* in January 1896.

Mention was made in the previous chapter of the enormous correspondence carried on by him in the interests of the I.B.R.A., the Continental Mission, and Sunday-school work generally, at home and abroad. To an interviewer in 1900, he admitted that—

"During last December and January we received more than 8000 letters from different parts of the

world." And he added simply, "The answers to these letters involve a large amount of work."

Our subject in this chapter is Mr. Waters' journalistic and literary work. The extent of the material from his pen that has found its way into print is astonishing in view of the fact that he was never known as a literary man. The palsied thumb of 1861 was, by Divine mercy, able to do a tremendous amount of useful work for Christ thirty years later.

To begin with, there are his *Hints on the Daily Readings.* It is true he did not write them all. But he must have written with his own hand almost a complete devotional Commentary on the Scriptures. He broke the bread of life into choice morsels, so small that babes in Bible knowledge might receive them with profit, and so choice that maturer believers might enjoy the spiritual fare. That he succeeded, the continually inflowing stream of testimony to the universal appreciation of the *Hints* is sufficient witness.

Instances might be multiplied a thousandfold. Here are just two: "My *Hints* are of immense value to me. I always feel our honoured Secretary has been in close touch with God in writing them."

"The Bible Class desire me to say how very much they appreciated Mr. Waters' noble work. . . . One dear girl who had never read a Bible, or had one in her possession until we gave her one, found the *Hints* such a light to her dark mind that she could not express her gratitude!"

Of how many commentaries could it be said that they are read daily by a million persons? How many expository works have been the means of the conversion of their readers? Mr. Waters was continually rejoiced by such testimony.

The tiny leaflets with the modest name *Hints* are carefully treasured in many places. The Secretary of the Southampton Branch told of an aged Bible reader who had carefully preserved the *Hints* for six years, and had had them bound in a volume together with the *Circular Letters.*

"We were all charmed with the dear little book, and I think a good number of us, instead of destroying our *Hints* at the close of the year, will be saving them and getting them bound."

The same idea has occurred to readers in other parts of the globe. A correspondent in Trinidad, Port of Spain, writes:—

"Our people realise the value of the daily readings more and more, as I can see from their eagerness to receive the *Hints.* One member said: 'Since I take the *Hints* I love my Bible more and more. It has opened new passages to me. . . . It has given me a longing to study the Word of God as thoroughly as I can.' He has gained five new names in that village."

The *Circular Letters* issued quarterly with the *Hints* were written very simply, and usually contained some illustrative and striking incident which greatly added to their attractiveness.

The invariable theme of these *Circular Letters*

was the preciousness of the Word of the living God. One is amazed at the consecrated skill with which this musician, playing always upon this solitary string, for such a long period of years, was able to produce such a delightful variety of sweet music. His solitary theme was an inexhaustibly opulent mine of treasure. The little Circulars seemed to become fresher, more charming, and more telling, with every additional year of their issue.

Mr. Waters' contributions under the *nom de plume* "The Man at the Wheel," to the *Silver Link*, a small monthly issued to help the work of the I.B.R.A., were always vivacious. He used the space to give interesting information from far-off fields of service, and to encourage the workers, rapidly becoming a very numerous body, to unceasing activity in the cause.

"Passengers are warned against talking to the man at the wheel," said he in an early number. "But in the case of the I.B.R.A. ship, the winds are fair, the sky is blue, and rocks are rare, so the man at the wheel has full permission to receive communications from those who are sailing with him."

In January 1897 appeared the first number of the *I.B.R.A. Messenger*, a quarterly paper under Mr. Waters' honorary editorship. This magazine gave him many opportunities of giving judicious counsels to the Branch Secretaries and other workers in the Association. Its pages were usually

full of information relative to the conditions of Christian work in other lands, and the progress made. The Annual Meetings and special Conventions were also reported in full, out of consideration for members in far-away places.

It fell to his lot frequently to be requested—particularly by editors of colonial and foreign religious papers—to give some account of the Association, its aims, methods, and success, for the benefit of their readers. There is a great heap of cuttings from such publications, all carefully arranged and labelled in his usual neat and orderly manner. They represent the religious press (taking them as they come) of Ontario, the United States (a great variety), Nova Scotia, Bombay, Germany, Switzerland, New Zealand, Australia, Jamaica, Calcutta, Denmark, New Brunswick, China, Sweden, Holland, South Africa, etc. etc. One of the American papers containing an article bears the highly significant title *Push*. It is a Sunday-school paper published in Richmond, Va.

The claims of the children of India lay especially near to his heart. When, in 1890, some Indian missionaries sent over an appeal to the Sunday School Union that a special missionary should be sent out to promote their spiritual interests, Mr. Waters at once proposed that the I.B.R.A. should undertake the responsibility.

Only one halfpenny per annum was asked of each member in the home branches. At once came the hearty endorsement of the proposal from

all parts of the kingdom; and Dr. J. L. Phillips and, afterwards, the Rev. R. Burges were sent out.

"When Dr. Phillips began his labours there were in India nearly one hundred million of children, but of these only one hundred thousand were in Sunday schools. In 1907 there were more than four hundred and twenty thousand Indian Sunday scholars. The halfpennies given by I.B.R.A. members have produced much good fruit." So wrote Mr. Waters in February 1909 in his special "Indian Circular" to the members.

"Our Fund is helpful in another way," he continued. "We help the missionaries to print little leaflets about the lessons with pictures; many of these are fixed up in the homes of the children, even though their fathers and mothers are not Christians. There is no difficulty in getting the children to our Sunday schools, even when their parents would not listen to the missionaries."

Early in 1909 Mr. Waters wrote his last booklet, *A Fruitful Tree and its Luxuriant Growth.* It is a well arranged narrative of the astonishing progress of the I.B.R.A., written clearly and concisely, and illustrated by fifteen excellent photographic groups of members in all parts of the earth, from Sweden the first picture, to Samoa the last. The story closes with the following impressive sentences:—

"Thus we have described the growth of the Tree. Its planting seems but a little way past to

those who were concerned, but how it has grown and spread! This satisfactory increase has been brought about by the quiet influence of personal experience, coupled with the earnest voluntary efforts of the great company of District and Branch Secretaries. Back of these there can be no doubt that God Himself was working, inasmuch as the supreme object and aim of the Association has been the glory of God and the salvation of its members. On this ground we claim the sympathy and support of all who seek to bless the rising generation, to strengthen the spiritual influence of our Churches, and to bring the Bible into closer contact with the daily life of our people."

CHAPTER XII.

AMONG HIS COLLEAGUES.

CHARLES WATERS enjoyed the privilege of working side by side with some altogether admirable colleagues. It would be to convey an entirely false impression if, these being unmentioned, the readers of this work were led to suppose that he accomplished his great purposes alone and unaided.

It is greatly to the credit both of Mr. Waters and of his surviving fellow-workers that their comradeship and co-operation stood the test of time for so many long years, and that as the years passed the mutual respect and love existing on both sides deepened and strengthened. And this notwithstanding that the continually expanding success of the work made ever-increasing demands upon their time and attention, necessitating almost daily intercourse and deliberation. Thus, surely, it ought always to be among those who labour together in the glorious service of the Divine Master.

The premier place must be given to the respected Chairman of the I.B.R.A. Committee, Mr. Henry Hawkes. Mr. Hawkes and Mr. Waters were comrades in their youth. They had much in common. They were both Sunday-school teachers in South London fifty years ago, and were sent by their respective schools as representatives to the Lambeth Auxiliary Committee, Mr. Hawkes in 1859, Mr. Waters a year or two later. The Auxiliary sent them both in due course to the Central Council of the Union.

Mr. Waters in the first number of the *I.B.R.A. Messenger* inserted an article from the pen of Mr. Hawkes on "How to Work a Branch." In introducing him, Mr. Waters said: "Mr. Hawkes, Chairman of the I.B.R.A. Committee, has been associated with it from the beginning, in 1882. The Centenary Memorial Sunday School, Kennington, which he ably superintends, is one of the best organised schools in London. The teachers and scholars number 480, but the I.B.R.A. Branch, of which Mr. Hawkes acts as Secretary, includes 640 members."

It was not to be wondered at that Mr. Waters took pleasure in being associated with this sort of worker in the King's business.

Mr. W. H. Groser, B.Sc., ex-President and senior Honorary Secretary of the Sunday School Union, was also a colleague and friend of Mr. Waters of many years' standing. Mr. Groser and Mr. Waters were co-Secretaries for several years; and of the British

International Lessons Committee they had been fellow-members for nearly twenty years. Mr. Groser's tribute to his friend is as follows :—

"Meeting Mr. Waters thus frequently and in different departments of service, it was impossible not to form a very high estimate of his personal character as a man and a Christian, and of his integrity of purpose and persistent devotion to whatever work he undertook."

Mr. J. G. Lewis, one of the original members of the I.B.R.A. Committee, was another well-tested fellow-worker for many years, who has cheerfully placed himself at the disposal of the Union to serve the children and the youth of this and other lands for Christ's sake. Mr. Lewis and Mr. Hawkes are now the only surviving members of the original Committee. Rev. Carey Bonner, too, the General Secretary of the Union, though his years of service do not run so far back, has given valuable aid in the enterprises associated with the name of Charles Waters.

Two names—the names of comparatively young men—stand apart from all others as the every-day helpers of Mr. Waters, particularly for the last dozen years or so: Mr. S. C. Bailey and Mr. E. R. Nicole. Mr. Bailey served with Mr. Waters for nineteen years on the I.B.R.A. Committee; and for eleven years they were Honorary Secretaries of the Committee, working daily together in the most perfect accord and single-heartedness. The consecrated devotion of the

senior secretary was ever an inspiration to the younger man, who served by his side as a son in the gospel.

When it was found that Mr. Waters must go to a surgical home for the fatal operation, he took his friend upstairs to his "den," his workroom.

"Here you will find such and such records," he said. "In that parcel I have left certain papers; in those drawers, certain others. I want you to be able to find everything you may need."

"But," protested Mr. Bailey, "you are only going to take a rest. You will be back at your work again in two or three months, we hope."

"We cannot tell," rejoined Mr. Waters. "If it be His will, I should like to come back. We cannot tell."

He did not go back. Mr. Bailey has said, "I am almost overwhelmed by the thought that I shall see his face no more."

Mr. E. R. Nicole is to the Continental Mission what Mr. Bailey has now become to the I.B.R.A., the Honorary Secretary. The keen interest taken in the work of that Mission by Mr. Waters, of the Committee of which he was Chairman, brought him into intimate association with Mr. Nicole. In the work of the I.B.R.A. also Mr. Nicole has taken an important part for many years. His tribute to his chief is as follows:—

"It has been my great privilege and joy to be closely in touch with Mr. Waters. His devotion . . . was beyond my feeble power to express. I believe

he really lived for the extension of the movement. If ever a Christian worker could echo the words of the Apostle Paul, 'This one thing I do,' it was surely he. Whilst manifesting a lively interest in other branches of the work of the Sunday School Union, it always seemed to me that in so doing it was with the ultimate aim of still further pressing forward his great idea of encircling the earth with a chain of Bible-readers."

There were others, true yokefellows, equally worthy and devoted, though perhaps not so intimately associated with the detail of the work, who will be remembered when the Master says "Well done!"

Of his fellow-labourers in the provinces and abroad, an exceeding great army, it will be readily understood that space will not admit of mention.

CHAPTER XIII.

DROPPING THE REINS.

"MY work! my work! It cannot be that my work is done yet!" As he lay upon his bed the watchers caught the murmur of these words as they came feebly from the pale and tremulous lips of the dying man.

On Tuesday, December 21st, 1909, Charles Waters paid his last visit to the old familiar scene of his great life-work, the offices of the Sunday School Union, in Old Bailey. How little he imagined, as he left behind the familiar Committee-rooms in which he and his colleagues had deliberated so many times upon the work of God at home and overseas, and the busy store- and packing-rooms with their zealous workers, that he was taking farewell of earthly service for ever! The short winter day closed over the City of London which he was never again to see. The streets of the city of light and beauty, whose

"sun knoweth no going down," were speedily to welcome him to his rights of citizenship.

In the evening of that day he went out for his customary walk after tea. "I think I will look in and see the doctor while I am out," he said to Mrs. Waters before leaving home.

The interview with his medical man disclosed very grave symptoms. So serious was the case that the doctor himself insisted on taking him home in his carriage, wrapped up carefully in rugs to avoid a chill.

The result of an immediate conference with a specialist was that an operation was arranged for. He was removed on the Tuesday after Christmas to a private surgical home, very near to the house in Overton Road in which he had spent so many of the happy and fruitful years of his life. There the operation was performed on Thursday, 30th December, while hundreds who had quickly learned of his alarming condition united in earnest intercession with God that such a precious life might be spared.

The surgeons decided that a second operation was urgently necessary. For this, the sufferer had not the needful reserve of strength. His loved ones were with him at the last, as his life gently ebbed away, on Friday, 7th January 1910; and a great multitude, whose pilgrim-life he had helped on earth, was at the Beautiful Gate to bid him welcome to the life beyond.

In the year 1858, Mr. Waters, in his youth,

MR. & MRS. CHARLES WATERS.

Photo. by Wykeham,] [*Balham.*

prepared a paper for a Bible class, in the little chapel in Maidstone. Here are a few sentences from it:—

"With the Christian, death is but the messenger, to fetch him to the embraces of his Heavenly Father; the gentle breeze, to waft his frail barque into the haven; the key, to unlock the prison doors and set him free; the last though longest step of his pilgrimage to the heavenly land. It is the dawn of the eternal day, when the sun shall go no more down. It is the window of the ark, through which the dove, fatigued with flight, enters, and finds security and rest. It is the final stroke, in which the victory over all his spiritual foes is gained, and he becomes more than conqueror through the blood of Jesus!"

This was the faith of his youth and the joyous hope and triumphant assurance of his riper years.

His mortal remains were laid to rest in Camberwell Cemetery, Honor Oak, on Wednesday, 11th January—the Rev. T. L. Edwards officiating at the grave-side.

There was a great congregation at the funeral service in the Metropolitan Tabernacle. There were present many members of the Council of the Sunday School Union and nearly all the members of the I.B.R.A. Committee; Dr. Glover, Dr. Rowland, and Professor S. W. Green represented the International Lessons Committee; and Bishop Hassé, the London C.E. Committee. Pastor A. G. Brown

conducted the service, which opened with the grand hymn—

> "Our God, our help in ages past,
> Our hope for years to come;
> Our shelter from the stormy blast,
> And our eternal home."

The memorial address was delivered by Mr. Waters' friend and colleague, the General Secretary of the Sunday School Union, Rev. Carey Bonner. Mr. Bonner showed great discernment in the choice of his line of thought, and much spiritual power in the treatment of it. The address was based on Bunyan's picture in the House of the Interpreter: "*the picture of a very grave person . . . his eyes were lifted up to heaven, the best of books was in his hand, the law of truth was written upon his lips, the world was behind his back, he stood as if he pleaded with men, and a crown of gold did hang over his head.*"

"Is not the likeness a true one?" inquired Mr. Bonner. "True in part of the outward man as we knew him, and true entirely of his inward being. . . . He did not speak easily or often of the deepest things in his own experience. . . . He was shy and sensitive in such matters. But at times, in those quiet hours some of us had the privilege of spending with him in the heart affluence of discursive talk, when we came near, and spirit touched spirit, then we fathomed depths unguessed before. My friendship taught me that to Mr.

Waters love was not so much a sentiment as a guiding principle. All his personal dealings as far as I was concerned were characterised by considerate brotherly-kindness. I have been with him in the company of little children. I saw the love-light in his eyes, and found that fine strong face transfigured in the sunshine of heaven.

"There was a singular directness in everything he did. . . . He saw life steadily. This was seen both in his outward life and in his beliefs. His trust was like that of a little child. His creed was that he a sinful man had been redeemed by Jesus Christ. . . . I have sometimes wondered whether, when first planning the I.B.R.A., he ever thought that in a quarter of a century the organisation would belt the world! I trow not. But he knew his Saviour. That was all! . . .

"Did you who knew him most intimately ever hear from his lips anything that did not accord with the highest standards of truthfulness? Never once. . . . His speech and his deeds were marked by a simplicity that was almost severe. He wasted no words, but aimed in unadorned language to state clearly what was in his mind. . . . How quietly he laboured! There was no ostentation, no seeking for men's praise. The only boon he asked of life was opportunity to serve.

"We can hardly think of him without the Sacred Volume. He was untroubled by any theories as to its origin or its interpretation. He believed that to read it was of greater worth than to argue

about it. . . . How clearly the guiding hand of God can be seen in the preparation of His servant for the life-work as we trace the outlines of his career!"

Among the many beautiful floral tributes laid upon his coffin was one from the I.B.R.A. Committee, arranged in the shape of an open book to represent the Bible, with the letters I.B.R.A. in violets across the pages of white flowers. Another, from the members of the staff, took the form of a Maltese cross, to represent the badge of the Association.

Very touching was the message from Mrs. Waters. She wrote to the readers of the *I.B.R.A. Messenger*:—

"I feel I must write and tell you how your letters of loving sympathy, from all parts, from friends and strangers alike, have comforted me in my deep sorrow.

"Our leader was unable to speak during the last day of his life on earth. But if he had spoken would not his words have been of his work? And can we not imagine how he would ask each and all of us to study our Bible more, and to strive this year to increase the number of those who are reading daily the Word of God, which alone can make us wise unto salvation? . . . May we be kept faithful

> 'Till with the morn those angel faces smile,
> That we have loved long since and lost awhile.'

"Your sincere friend,
"E. WATERS."

When Mr. Waters was in Naples in 1907 he attended a United Sunday School Gathering in the Waldensian Church.

"The church was in a narrow street and dimly lighted, but for the time it was a 'Sunday school,' and the bright young faces and cheery voices joining in happy song made it a radiant spot."

At the close of the service a lad stepped forward and presented him with a magnificent bouquet of roses, grown under the brilliant Italian skies. Attached to the bouquet was the visiting-card of "Irene Monda, Del Duchi D'Aragonia."

The choice flowers have long since faded and returned to dust. The devoted hand that received them has been laid in the grave. "The flower fadeth; but the word of the Lord endureth for ever." And the faithful soul of Charles Waters has entered into that "inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE HAPPY MAN OF THE 1ST PSALM.

T would be inappropriate in the extreme if this brief biography were to close abruptly with the decease of its subject, and particularly as he has bequeathed such a vital, expansible, and urgent work to his successors. The movement he inaugurated and fostered with such devotion and solicitude for upwards of a quarter of a century is still advancing with the vigour of youth, the blessing of the Most High resting upon it in ever-increasing measure.

Charles Waters honoured God by honouring His holy Word, and by continually pressing its claims and presenting its attractions before his fellow-men. We cannot better show our reverence for his memory than by attention to his earnest exhortations and invitations, in respect of this supremely important subject, the daily study of the Sacred Volume.

The last *Secretary's Letter* issued during his life-

time (January 1910) contains these words of testimony:—

"In the first three verses of the Book of Psalms there is a beautiful description of the happy man. The first verse shows what he is, the third pictures his future, and the middle verse indicates the source of it all, 'His delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law doth he meditate day and night.' Thousands of years ago this was found to be a source of the truest happiness, and all along the intervening years a great multitude of people, young and old, have been proving the truthfulness of it. I therefore have no hesitation in saying that a faithful membership of the I.B.R.A., which means a daily reading and study of God's Word, is a most likely means of bringing happiness into our lives. It is just because we believe this to be a fact that the Committee and many thousands of I.B.R.A. workers in all quarters of the world are cheerfully giving time and effort to promote the success and extension of our great Association."

Surely the name of Charles Waters deserves a place beside those of John Wycliffe and William Tyndale, the two distinctive champions of the Bible in this country in past generations. To Wycliffe, the clergyman of Lutterworth, belongs the honour of giving to the British race the Bible in our own tongue. To Tyndale falls the honour of multiplying copies of the Scriptures by means of the printing-press, at his own personal peril, and

ultimately at the cost of his life, so that the poorest ploughboy in the realm might have equal access to the "oracles of God" with the King of England.

And has not Charles Waters also earned the lasting gratitude of the people who have benefited, and will yet benefit, in the enormous daily Bible class, a million strong, who have been taught by his unwearied endeavours to make the sublime teachings of the Holy Book a continual lamp to their feet and light to their path?

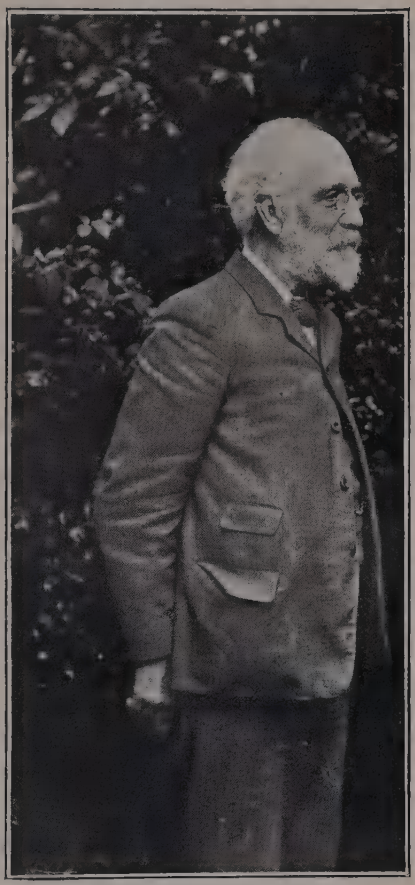
His defence against the charge of "Bibliolatry" is decisive. He effectually turns the tables upon his accusers.

"Those of us who love the Bible are now and then warned that we are in danger of becoming 'Bibliolaters,' or Bible-worshippers. In these days we fear there are not too many who run such a risk. The voice of warning would be much more usefully employed in rousing those who are in *danger of losing* their love for the Bible."

"There is abundant reason why every member should try to bring in others to join our great company of Bible-readers. There are so many other attractions that too often the Bible gets neglected and is never read."

The Bible, he urged, ought not to be read only for the sake of reading it. That were to make a superstitious use of it.

"What have we learnt these three months?" he asks in one of his letters. "The fruit-gatherer would be dissatisfied if, at the close of the day, he



MR. CHARLES WATERS.
A snapshot in his garden.

had nothing in his basket. The fisherman looks very blank when his net comes up empty. So we ought to expect good from our Bible-study."

"Let our reading be thorough, not formal; thoughtful and prayerful, never hurried and heedless. Butterflies flit from flower to flower, but get none the richer; bees dive into the centre of each, and carry away a store of honey. Let us in our Bible-reading imitate the bees, not the butterflies."

"The doctors tell us that the benefit to be derived from our daily meals depends not so much upon the quantity we eat as upon its fitness and our ability to digest it. Our selections are purposely short, in order that every one may be able to partake of the daily portion, and so to think about it as to make it really beneficial. If the few verses are stored in our hearts, they will be of more use than a whole chapter carelessly read. But it must not be thought that our selections are all that should be read of God's Word. There are many of us who read more than once a day, and consider that our souls are better with two meals than with one."

Mr. Waters' thoughts were with his companions in Bible-study the world over; and indeed they were in his heart. "During the past summer we paid several visits to the Colonial and Indian Exhibition. We felt special interest in it because of the bond which our Association makes with so many of the countries there represented. There were finger-posts directing 'To Victoria,' 'To Canada,' etc. It

seemed pleasant to feel (although only a fancy) that we were going from one colony to another. As we looked . . . the objects seemed quite familiar, because of those associated with us. It helped us to feel nearer to those of you who live in Australia, New Zealand, India, Ceylon, Cape Colony, Canada, Newfoundland, West Indies, Demerara, and other places. We looked with much interest on your pictures, luscious fruits, specimens of your handiwork, the golden ores, and brilliant diamonds from your mines. But most of them were labelled, 'Do not touch.' In one of the Courts were samples of sugar for tasting. They were very sweet. This we know, for *we tasted*. Some of you do not yet know that salvation is sweet, because you have not sought or desired it. We know, because we have tried; and we say to you, 'O taste and see that the Lord is good!'"

The best Bible "evidences" are the results that have followed the study of it. It is in these that it differs from all other books. These results are seen not in one country alone, but in every land into which the Word of God has entered.

"It is in this way that the Bible is seen to be far superior to the other so-called sacred books of the world. The Mohammedan, the Hindu, the Chinese, and others have the writings of their sages which they revere; but none of them can show such wonderful effects as the Bible. . . . Many of us can tell of men and women who at one time were more godless than the heathen, and as wicked as

savages, but who have been changed by the casting out of the evil spirit in them and the coming in of that new life which God alone can give. No doubt some of you who read these lines will say, 'That is just my case.'"

The need of the illumination of the Holy Spirit as essential to the profitable reading of Holy Scripture was never forgotten by Mr. Waters.

"Let us remember," said he, "that without prayer and thought, and the help of the Holy Spirit, the mere reading will be of very little use to us."

"A boy was once looking into a stereoscope, and complained that he could see nothing. How was it? Because the lid was shut down and the light could not enter! Some people when they read the Bible see none of its beauties, because they do not let in the light from above. If we pray for the Holy Spirit to influence our minds when reading, we shall find our Daily Readings most enjoyable and useful."

We cannot do better in bringing to a close this brief account of the life and labours of our beloved friend in the service of the King of kings than call to mind the stirring bugle-blast of his "Silver Jubilee" Report:—

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Heaven speed thee on thy way,
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